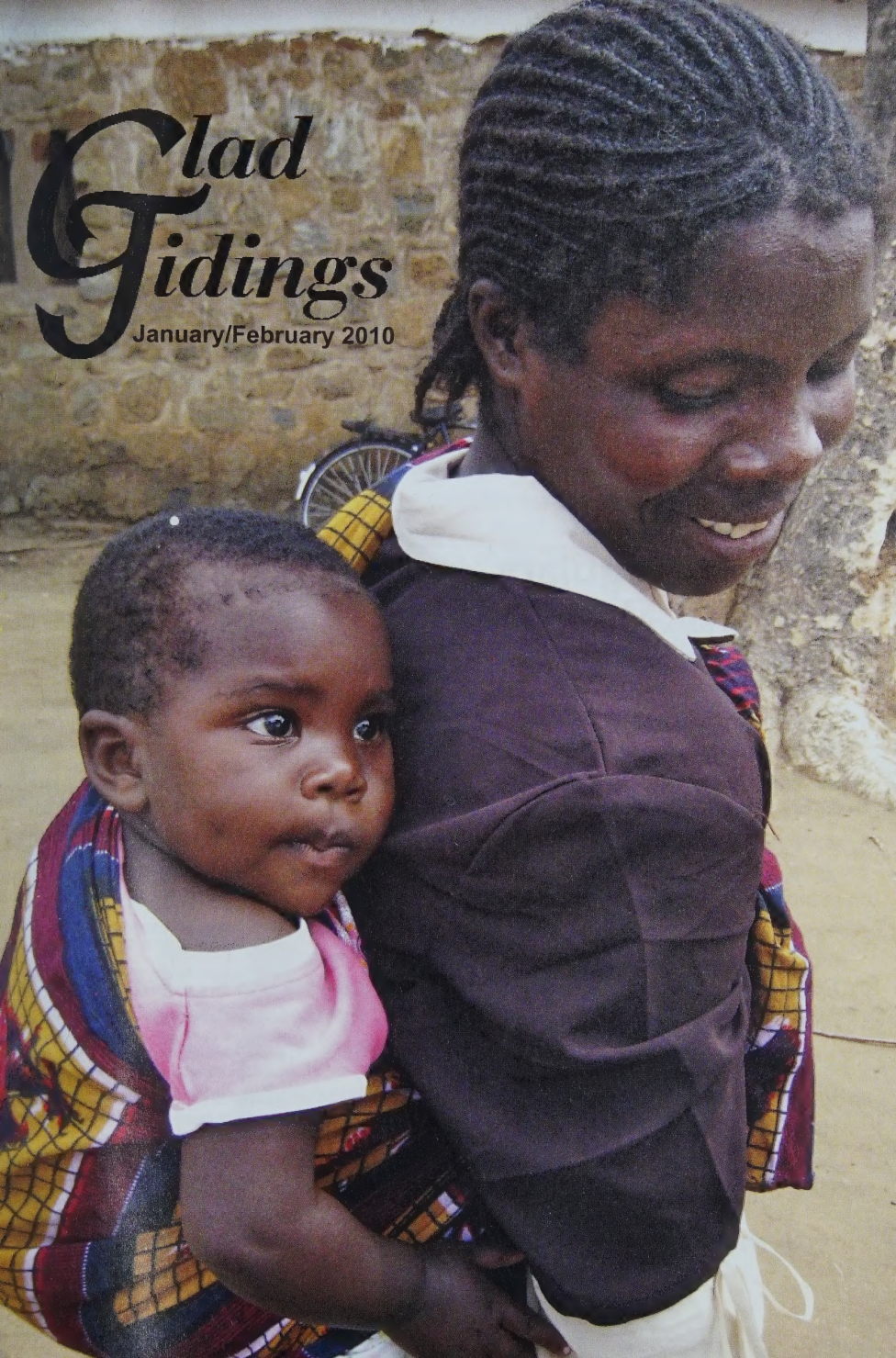

Glad Tidings
January/February 2010

Contents

Features

Malawi: WMS Exposure Tour Journal

Page 4

Palestinian Christians and the Challenges of Today

Nicole McLellan-Cliteur

Page 12

11 **John the Baptist—a puzzle** ..... *James Phillips*

18 **Fall WMS Council Executive Meeting** .....

21 **Human Trafficking: Ideas for Action** .....

22 **Circles of Sharing** .....

Regulars

3 **From the Editor's Desk** .....

26 **Book Reviews** .....

30 **Mission in Action** .....

37 **In Memoriam** .....

38 **In the Society** .....

42 **Forward in Faith** .....

46 **Circulation News** .....

47 **Pass Me Along** .....

47 **In Remembrance** .....

Certainly, travel is more than
the seeing of sights;
it is a change that goes on,
deep and permanent,
in the ideas of living.

~Miriam Beard

Cover Photo: Pat Shaver

Glad Tidings

January/February 2010
Volume 86, No. 1

INTERIM EDITOR
HEATHER JONES
DESIGN
ALEXIS McKEOWN
CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

Published six times a year by the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to the circulation department at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Phone (416) 441-1111. Fax (416) 441-2825. E-mail Editorial gladtidings@presbyterian.ca. Circulation kallen@presbyterian.ca. Publications mail registration number 09517. ISSN: 00170720.

We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Canada

Member of the Canadian Church Press and the Associated Church Press.

Subscription rate $14.00 including G.S.T. per year. Single copies $2.40. WMS members should send their subscriptions through their group *Glad Tidings* Secretary. Individual subscribers may order direct from *Glad Tidings*. Please make all money orders and cheques payable at par to *Glad Tidings*.

Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Heather Jones

From the Editor's Desk

Happy New Year! There are a number of 'New Years' that we celebrate, to greater or lesser extents. As you read this, in the early days of 2010, we are celebrating the new calendar year. In the church, we also take note of the new church year that starts with the first Sunday of Advent. There is nothing official about it, but the day after Labour Day weekend is, in many ways, the beginning of a new year. All of these are 'new years' that we mark within our communities.

What is it about New Years (or new years) that appeals to us? I was thinking about a custom I once learned: as the countdown to midnight on Dec 31 begins, everyone lifts their right foot. As the count reaches zero, and the New Year begins, everyone puts their right foot back on the floor, so that everyone starts the New Year 'on the right foot'.

I think that is the answer to our affinity for celebrating new years. Every new beginning is a chance to start afresh. We use the calendar, or the rhythms of the program year, to give ourselves opportunities for a fresh start.

Many of the articles in this issue of *Glad Tidings* are stories of travelling. I think that everyone who has travelled has undertaken a new beginning of their own. Travelling in order to learn (which is usually different from travelling for recreation or relaxation) changes people, giving them a new perspective that often affects their whole world-view. To those who have travelled, I would like to say "congratulations!" and "please, share your stories." To those who are not able to travel, I would like to encourage you to listen to the stories of those who have 'been there'—in this magazine you can read the stories of the young people who went to the Sabeel Conference in the Middle East, the women who came to Canada from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, the group who travelled to Malawi, and others. Let their new perspectives inform your world-view.

We too can be changed by what they have seen. If we can see through their eyes, the differences, the needs, and the commonalities, then we too can start anew. As we all broaden our perspective, God's power to give fresh starts will be shared and celebrated, and I think we will all be brought closer to the unity of humanity that can lead to the healing of nations.

Happy New Beginnings to all!

MALAWI

WMS Exposure Tour Journal

To travel with and for the church in Malawi is to gather a heart-ful of contrasting images: the basic houses with mud walls and thatched roofs beside modern high-rise buildings; dusty, rutted tracks called 'roads' and Mercedes Benz cars; poor, hungry people sharing generously with visitors; beautiful sunny skies and astounding views of star-filled night skies above trees stripped of bark, and land baked dry, hard, and unyielding; joy-filled faith even in the midst of illness, death, and grief. During the 14 days that the WMS Exposure Tour Group spent in the Blantyre Synod area of Malawi, they experienced it all.

Travelling with the church provides a perspective unavailable to the average tourist. Because of the long partnership between The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), the group had the chance to visit the homes of average Malawians, view first-hand the development work of the church, and share worship and fellowship time with brothers and sisters

in Christ. The women of the WMS group came from communities across Canada and were able to deliver some gifts that are tokens of the care and concern of Canadian Presbyterians for our Malawian brothers and sisters. In Christ we are all one and the experience of sharing life in Malawi, even for this brief time, helped participants understand more about the need for justice in the world.

One of the phrases often used by Malawians is 'little by little'. Sometimes it is difficult to see so much poverty, so much need, so many barriers to abundant life. The following comments, taken from the group's communal journal, describe some of the need and some of the little bits of success being made in the struggle for development. It is hoped that the story of this trip will convey some of the power of 'being there' and some of the dilemma of being concerned enough to care deeply about our partners, yet feeling overwhelmed by the magnitude of problems of a country as poor as Malawi.

Thursday

Our first stop was the Synod Office where one of our hosts Glenn Inglis introduced the development department staff who gave us an over-view of their work. They deal with concerns about health, vulnerable children, violence, and gender issues. As a WMS member I was proud when they mentioned that PWS&D contributes $55,000* per year to the work here.

Travelling to the near-by Children's Centre we played games and sang songs with some of the youngest Malawians. Our reward was a sea of smiles which will remain in my heart as one of God's special gifts to me. Another special time today was when we were able to give each child an Izzie doll. We thank the ladies who

**This is the figure for the PWS&D contribution to one project in the Titikulane Ana area. Total grants to the Blantyre Synod for 2009 are approximately $107,000. See PWS&D Annual Report for further details.*

knitted them as we enjoyed the pleasure each child showed as they received one.

Pictures won't do the day justice; however, they may give a bit of flavour to the day. My hope is to share with people at home the depth of the needs and the simple joys we are seeing here.

Saturday

We were greeted at Dzunga Church with women singing a welcome song—as has been the case in every location so far! There are 36 churches divided into eight parishes in Blantyre North Presbytery. There are only eight ministers to serve these congregations. Much of the preaching is offered by elders. We met with the women of the Mvano (Women's Guild) all dressed in their black-and-white uniforms.

Monday

We visited the Apatsa school which was tidy and well maintained, despite being a very basic structure. We were entertained by rhymes and poems recited by the younger children and a drama presentation by the older boys and girls. Their message was that orphaned children deserve and should be given the same love and opportunities as children with parents.

What fun it was to be able to share a little bit of joy by presenting ten soccer balls, donated by a member of a congregation in BC!

At Mulanje Hospital, the maternity ward was high on our list because several bags of knitting had been brought by our group. Dr. Dr Roland van de Ven explained how the simple intervention of providing a temperature-controlled area, warm

enough for the babies born too early, has increased the survival rate for these precious newborns. There were five preemies in the ward that day, including two sets of twins.

Sights, sounds, feelings, and emotions are overwhelming—but over and through it all was a sense of joy. God bless His people here in Africa and help us to remain faithful in prayer and in action.

Tuesday

On the way to the village of Kuchombe, our bus met with misfortune on a rocky slope, and its back bumper was severely dented. Cramming into the alternative transport that finally came to save us, we continued on to the village, arriving more than three hours late. Would I have stayed around at my church to wait for someone that late? No matter—we were met by women and children enthusiastically singing and dancing to welcome us. After Druse's apology on our behalf, we were welcomed by a gracious woman leader who encouraged us to introduce ourselves. The village chief, another woman, then made a memorable comment: "Through these introductions comes freedom, a special freedom to relate in a meaningful way."

Wednesday

One can't visit Africa without experiencing something of the wildlife! We arrived in the beautiful Chinguini Hills and enjoyed an early evening drive around Liwondi Park. We saw many birds, including doves, guinea fowl, spoon bill stork, and many weaver nests hanging from the tree branches. We were able to see water bucks, antelope and impala, and monkeys.

Then, one jeep blew a tire. There was no spanner (wrench) in either jeep! It was probably a good thing that we didn't know how nervous our guides were about us being stranded after dark! Not knowing that we should be afraid, we were awed by the beautiful night sky full of so many stars, including even some shooting stars!

Members of the Malawi Tour Group: Druse Bryan, Marlene Cribar, Lyn Hill, Laura Kavanaugh, Dineke Kraay, Merry Lidder, Jean MacDonald, Beth McIntosh, Cathy Reid, Marilyn Rowlins, Patricia Shaver.

Sunday

Members of the group were billeted for one night. Here are two very different stories: Today, I saw another side of Malawi. My host family, Samuel and Cathy, own a private boarding school; therefore, they are part of a very small percentage of Malawians who are middle/upper class. Mind you Samuel wasn't always so fortunate. His father died when he was six and his mother had to struggle to raise three children. He decided as a boy that he would study and work hard so his family would not have to live in poverty.

I spent the weekend with Ellen of Chilumba Church, a lady very much on the ball, and well read about the state of Africa and in general—including a biography of Margaret Trudeau! Widowed at 27, one of 7 siblings, 5 of whom died of AIDS, she supported 15 orphaned nieces and nephews through school.

Monday

We're all ready for today's visit to another area of the Synod! Today we visit the Livelihood Program, which is one of the programs run by the Development Commission. After introductions by the women and by ourselves, we got underway with a discussion about the effect of climate change on the life and work of these women—all of whom are farmers. The main change—and the challenge—is that they can no longer predict when the rainy season will begin. This greatly affects the timing of their planting and also shortens the growing season and reduces the yield. Most of the farms are about 0.3 hectares and are cultivated by the women for their own family consumption. Irrigation is another challenge; we learned how they build box ridges lined with bricks to contain the water during the rains. They also told us of the soil erosion during the dry season and the serious lack of trees to provide wood for the making of charcoal, which is a source of income for the village.

We provided lunch and then each paired up with one of them and presented them with small gifts—soap, washing powder and three tree saplings each—guava, papaya and mango. They were delighted and sang and danced their thanks to us. It was a heart-warming visit and I hope that our visit has made some positive difference to their group.

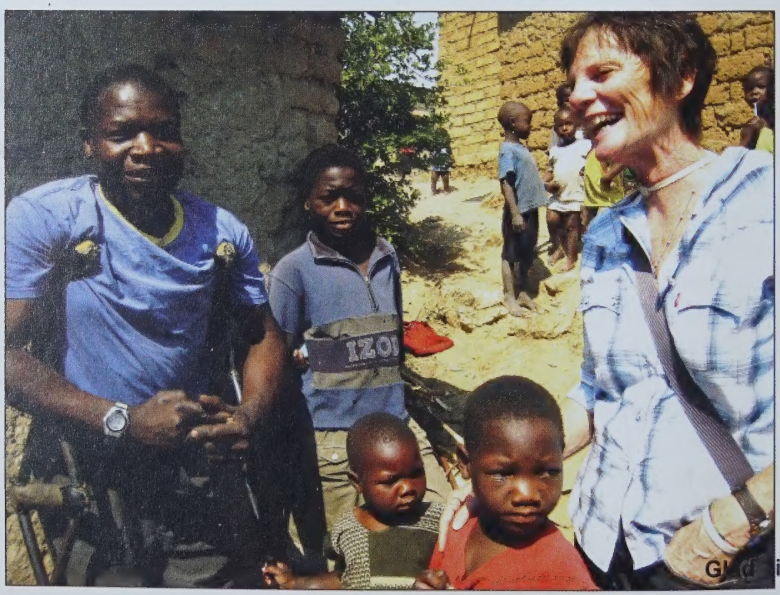
Tuesday

Our time in Malawi is growing short. This experience has given us much to ponder and the people we have met have given us memories with mixed emotions.

Today started with introductions to a new guide, Hamilton. He was taking us to visit the Tidzalerana project**—the care of disabled people, young and old. We have seen a bit of how hard life is for the majority of people here in Malawi, but Hamilton told us that having a physical or mental disability makes life even more difficult. This club helps people with disabilities discover that "disability is not inability." We first visited the new facility being built for this program. It will accommodate 13 handicapped people. In the afternoon we shared in their weekly meeting. We provided supplies and shared some different craft ideas with the participants. It was a fun time for all.

There are contrasts in Malawi, and in the world: rich and poor, black and white, rural and urban. But over and above and through all there is the unity of Christian fellowship. How can we learn to live with the contrasts and the injustices? How can we correct the imbalances? It seems too trite to say: "By recognizing the problem, we are half way to solving it." But there is truth there. Those who have seen will help others to see and understand. 'Little by little,' by working together and responding to God's call for justice and right relationship, we will find hope. We may need to dig one well at a time, educate one student at a time, support one orphan at a time, but every well that is dug, every student that is educated, and every orphan that finds security, takes us one step closer to achieving our goal of abundant life for all God's children.

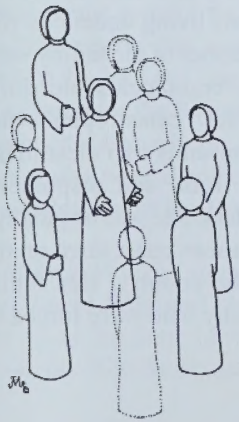
***For more information about this project, check the 'Gifts of Change' catalogue.*



John the Baptist

by James Phillips

E R Y E N O H S Z D
L S A I D O R E H E
I L D U N E C L D S
Z E H H H H T P E E
A I T E A L E I D R
B R R R J O H C A T
E B I O I C P S E E
T A B D L U O I H M
H G E R E S R D E P
F O T S I T P A B L
D A N C E S M U T E
N H O J E S U S N R



BAPTIST
BEHEADED
BIRTHDAY
DANCES
DESERT
DISCIPLES
ELIJAH
ELIZABETH
GABRIEL
HEROD
HERODIAS
HONEY
JESUS
JOHN
LOCUSTS
MUTE
PROPHET
TEMPLE
ZECHARIAH

Palestinian Christians and

This past summer, three representatives from The Presbyterian Church in Canada had the honour of attending a ten-day international conference in Israel-Palestine*. Delegates from seven countries, along with a group of participants from Israel-Palestine itself, spent the time learning about the Palestinian Christian community in Israel-Palestine and the challenges they encounter in the present day.

During the conference we travelled throughout the West Bank and Israel proper, beginning and ending in Jerusalem. The purpose of travelling was to see as much of the region as possible, and to meet with local people and organizations around the area. We met with both Palestinian and Israeli groups, whose purposes ranged from religious-based institutions to human rights groups to international organizations.

What stands out in my memory, months after coming home, is meeting local families, especially those in the West Bank. One of my most profound memories was from our visit to the Al-Arroub refugee camp outside of Hebron in the West Bank. At the camp, small groups of delegates were introduced to families who lived there, and shared dinner with them. The family I visited lived in a small home with four generations living under one roof. The eldest member of the family was a lady who was eight years old during the Nakba (the 'catastrophe'—the time when thousands of Palestinians were expelled from, and dispossessed of, their homes). She was originally from a Mediterranean coast town on the other side of the country. Her family was one of many who were forced to leave

ne Challenges of Today

by Nicole McLellan-Cliteur

during the Nakba. Her entire family travelled across the country to Al-Arroub and she has lived in the Al-Arroub camp since then.

During our visit, I spoke with the daughter-in-law of our host. She asked where I was from, and when I said that I was from Toronto, she got very excited. She told me that her brother had immigrated to Toronto ten years ago, and that she hasn't been able to visit him, as it is difficult for residents of refugee camps to travel abroad. This stands out in my memory, as I never imagined that just being from Toronto, and representing that huge city would mean so much to a person. She went on to tell me all about where he worked and lived, and I listened, amazed that this coincidence of my hometown could create such a deep bond between this woman and myself.

If there is one symbol for the challenges of this region that stands out in my mind, it is the key. The key is a symbol of hope for the Palestinians, as it represents the return home. Many of the people who were displaced in the 1948 Nakba still have the keys to their homes. Many Palestinians, like the lady I met in Al-Arroub, had been told that their town had to be cleared for security reasons, and that they could return in two weeks. When they did go back after two weeks, it was to find their homes occupied by new 'owners'. They were forced to give up on their homes, so were displaced internally or forced to move to a neighbouring country.

The conference was sponsored by an organization called Sabeel, and this was the fourth year that it has run. Sabeel is an ecumenical grassroots liberation theology movement working among Palestinian Christians. Sabeel is an Arabic word meaning "the way" or a "channel of life-giving water."

Sabeel is a Palestinian Christian organization, but still we had opportunities to meet with four Israeli activist groups during the conference: Rabbis for Human Rights, B'Tselem (The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories), Women in Black, and The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD). These groups, especially, were able to share the other side of this conflict: the

** In an attempt to avoid supporting the divisions that currently exist in the area, the term "Israel-Palestine" has been used frequently to describe the region. This includes all of the State of Israel, as well as the Occupied Territories of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.*

side of the Israeli people. Representatives from Rabbis for Human Rights were particularly insightful. We also met with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Jerusalem. OCHA was able to present the conflict from an international and external standpoint, which was very helpful to our understanding of the issues at hand.

The focus of this year's conference was on Palestinian Christians and the issues that they are facing. We were reminded that Palestinian Christians were the first Christians, as they lived in the area where Jesus was born and lived during his teaching. In 1950, 15% of the population in Israel-Palestine was Christian. Now, Christians represent less than 1%. This decline in numbers (largely due to mass emigration) is the biggest problem for Christian communities in Israel-Palestine. A large proportion of the large number of Christians who emigrate are young professionals. So, not only is the community losing its newly educated population, but it is also losing the next generation. If the pattern continues, it won't be very long until there will no longer be any Christians living in the Holy Lands.

The challenges encountered by the Palestinian Christians are rooted in a complicated history. Before World War I, Historical Palestine was controlled by the Ottoman Empire. After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, England received the mandate of Palestine, which was to monitor the area until it was ready for independent democratic rule. Mandate Palestine remained in British hands until after World War II, when the United Nations passed Resolution 181, or the Partition Plan. The Partition Plan divided Mandate

Nicole McLellan-Cliteur (left) with other conference participants.

Palestine into two parts: 56% for a Jewish state and 44% for the native Palestinians. This initiated the Israeli War of Independence, or the Palestinian Nakba. At the end of this war, Israel controlled 78% of Mandate Palestine, 700 000 to 900 000 Palestinians had become refugees and hundreds of Palestinian communities were destroyed. The Occupation of Palestinian territories began in 1967 with the Six Day War, during which Israel annexed East Jerusalem and took military control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

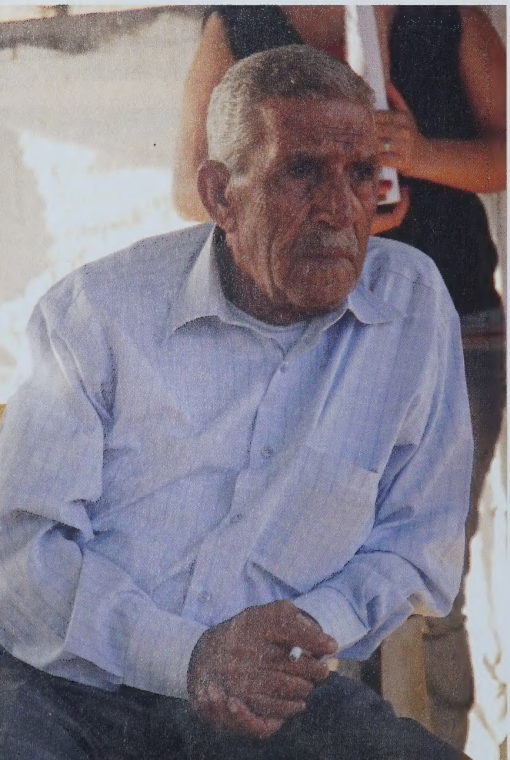
I learned many things from the Sabeel Conference. First of all, I learned that even the most oppressed people could show overwhelming generosity to complete strangers. In every single family home we visited, and in every hotel or convent where we stayed, our group was welcomed as though we were long lost relatives.

Secondly, even when our western media sources aren't reporting on any conflicts, it doesn't mean that they aren't happening. As aware as I am of current events, I knew very little about the issues in Israel-Palestine before my trip, other than the basic history. Now, I am always aware that things are happening in this troubled region. It is important to remember that the issues in Israel-Palestine affect people and those people do not fit into one classification. Palestinians are individuals who are deeply affected by a conflict that is too often over-simplified by the Western media.

Finally, it seems that most of the international community really doesn't understand what is happening in Israel-Palestine. In order to help with the situation, people need to seriously invest in learning about what is really happening. Unfortunately we can't rely on the

commercial media to teach what we need to know. In order to understand the conflict in Israel-Palestine, we need to learn a lot more about the history and the current politics of the area. It sometimes seems as if the media, and/or interest groups, and/or governments want people to believe that the issues are too complex to be dealt with by anyone who disagrees with their perspective. The issues are complicated, but they can be understood. There are reliable sources of information—they just need to be found, and shared, to counter the biases of those who would prefer a misinformed or uninformed public.

Before my trip, I had no idea about the daily suffering endured by the Palestinian people. Throughout the West Bank there are security checkpoints, which Palestinians have to pass through while travelling. The checkpoints are strategically located so you cannot travel from any major city to any other, without passing through at least one. There are also checkpoints that exist inside cities, such as Hebron, where we passed through five different checkpoints while walking through the city. This is the reality of the situation in Israel-Palestine, and the resiliency of the Christians living in Israel-Palestine. No matter what challenges are put in front of them, the Christians of Palestine do not give up hope.



During the conference, we were asked how we would explain what we saw and how we felt during our two weeks in Israel-Palestine. At this, we all went silent until one girl said, "Come see it for yourself. There are no words."

I have tried to share my experiences here, but these are only words. It is true: there is nothing quite like the experience of being in Israel-Palestine. For those who can't go to see for themselves, I encourage you to listen to people who have been there, read the reports that our church produces, and pray for peace.

For further information about the issues raised in this story, there is an excellent resource available through The Book Room: What is Palestine-Israel? Answers to Common Questions, *by Sonia K. Weaver. The book was commissioned by the Mennonite Central Committee, and is recommended by the PCC Justice Ministries Department.*

Whoever said, "You can't have your cake and eat it too," never heard of Gift Annuities

Gift Annuities are a way you can make a gift to the church to support the ministry of your choice and in return receive a guaranteed annual income for life, the majority or all of the income tax-free. Sound too good to be true? Call the Planned Giving Office today to learn how you can have your cake and eat it too.

What flavour of ministry would you like to support?

A real life example:

In 1994, Giollo Kelly acquired a $10,000 gift annuity which she designated for the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation. When she died fifteen years later, Giollo had received nearly $11,000 (87% tax-free) in total payments and left a legacy of nearly $7,500 with the money remaining in her annuity account.

(The above example is for illustrative purposes only. Annuity rates and the residue available for disbursement vary.)

For a free, no-obligation gift annuity quote, contact

Planned Giving Office
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
1-800-619-7301
plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca

Fall WMS Council Executive Meeting

October 14-16

This year's Fall meeting of the WMS Executive Council was held earlier than usual to allow executive members to share some time with our visitors from Taiwan (please see separate article on p. 22 for details). So, leaving turkey leftovers at home, 23 women travelled from near and far to consider the reports and recommendations related to the work of the WMS.

A highlight of the week was the opportunity to share the special Thanksgiving worship (including the music ministry of the staff choir) with the 50 Wynford Drive staff. As Jeremy Bellsmith, staff member of The Vine and worship leader for the day, pointed out at the beginning of the service, we have so much to be thankful for that we need more than one day! After worship, the participants in the service introduced themselves to Council Executive members. Our President Druse expressed the sentiments of many of the members of Council when she told the group how nice it was for them to be able to now put faces to the names and voices they have heard about or spoken to over the course of dealing with the National Office.

Finances

The Finance Committee expressed concern that some Presbyterials still have not remitted any funds to the National Office, while others seem to be quite far behind previous years' givings.

On a more positive note, the Treasurer reported on grants given to assist participants of Canada Youth 09. A total of $2,200 was distributed to assist delegates to attend the conference. (This is in addition to the grants to the Underground and administrative costs of CY09.)

Further grants totalling $4,000 were made to assist other international travellers, and $500 was given toward the costs of bringing a speaker to a Synodical.

At the end of September, the Jobat School Hostel Fund had more than $100,000; the fund for School Supplies in Eastern Europe had more than $35,000 (see Forward in Faith, p. 42).

Resources

The Program Committee reported on the resources for Mission Awareness Sunday (April 25, 2010) which, for this year have been written by Karen Horst. Bulletin inserts for the "Together We Can" projects will be distributed with these resources.

We Are in This Together, was distributed to groups in the Fall mailing. Once again this book of reports from missions and missionaries is an excellent resource. There are many ways to creatively use the stories included in it.

At the time of the meeting, the Church's study on refugees: *Making Connections: Staying Rooted in an Uprooted World* had just arrived from the printer. The Program Committee expressed concern over the timing of this release, since many groups begin their study program in September. The Council encouraged the representatives on the Education for Mission Committee to communicate this concern to the people who produce the study. That being said, the Program Committee is grateful to have the resources, and encourages all groups to make use of them.

Other resources recommended by the Program Committee are:

- *Carly*—an animated video about a refugee's search for a new home (7 minutes, downloadable from www.presbyterian.ca/refugees)
- *Niigaanibatowaad: FrontRunners*—a study guide produced by the Healing and Reconciliation Department to accompany the DVD of the same name.
- *Human Trafficking*—a movie on human trafficking. This is an informative, but disturbing film about the crimes being committed every day as women are abducted, or tricked into becoming part of the sex trade industry.

Look In—Shout Out: May 20-23, 2011

The planning team for the National Presbyterian Women's gathering reminded everyone that promotional bookmarks have been sent to all WMS groups. Members were encouraged to circulate these bookmarks to begin raising awareness of the event, and to encourage women to save the date and plan to attend. More details will be shared over the coming months.

Presidents Report

Druse Bryan reported on some of the many ways that she has represented the WMS—including attending the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women in Saskatchewan and the 60th Anniversary Celebrations of the Korean Christian Church in Japan (where Beth McIntosh was speaker), participating in the Exposure trip to Malawi, and travelling with the Taiwanese visitors.

Life and Mission Agency (LMA)

Rick Fee addressed Council Executive, sharing some of the activities and issues being considered by the LMA. He spoke of the desire of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria to establish congregations in Canada. The Ghanian church has been very successful with this, and there is interest in their model of outreach. This is just one example of the new understanding of mission and partnership.

There is significant concern about the shortfall in contributions to both Presbyterian World Service and Development and Presbyterians Sharing. The effect of the downturn in our economy is being felt within our national programs, but it is even more difficult for our international partners.

After lengthy but productive consultations with representatives of the Synods, the LMA has reached an agreement about how to make the difficult but necessary cuts to regional staffing grants for 2011. Rick outlined some of the history—some crucial pieces of which were never recorded—of the process for making grants for regional staffing. The LMA wished to find an equitable formula for determining how these grants would be made. Rick commended all of the participants in this process for their diligence and commitment to regional work.

The partnership between the WMS and the LMA is a strong and productive one. Rick gave thanks for the witness and work of the WMS, and members of Council appreciated his sharing in the meeting—both formally through his presentation and informally during break times.

Council Planning Committee

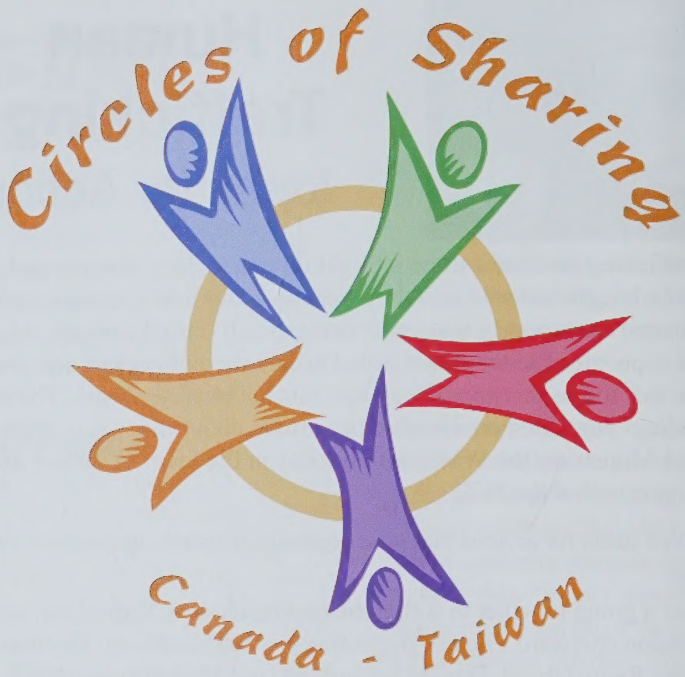
The committee reported on the plans being developed for the Council Meeting which will be held at Crieff, May 2–5. The theme for the meeting is: Women: Beloved by God, based on Prov 31:30 CEV. Once again, it promises to be a great opportunity to combine work, study, and fellowship.

Human Trafficking:
Ideas for Action

Human Trafficking continues to be a blight on our society. Women and children continue to be bought and sold as if they were no better than livestock, and indeed, are often treated more poorly than most domestically-raised animals. As children of God and as people of faith, we are called to care for our brothers and sisters, and to resist the evil forces that conspire to fuel this inhumane industry. The last issue of *Glad Tidings* contained an introductory article about this issue. With support from Justice Ministries, the WMS has undertaken the lead for raising awareness about this issue within the PCC.

Here are some ideas for actions that your community can do to increase awareness of this issue.

- Gather a group together to watch the movie, *Human Trafficking*, and have a discussion afterward. *Human Trafficking* is a 2005 made-for-TV 'docu-drama' starring Remy Girard, Donald Sutherland, and Mira Sorvino. While this is a fictionalized account of human trafficking, the basis for the plot is all too real. Earlier this year, the star of this production was named by the United Nations as a Goodwill Ambassador to combat human trafficking.
- Host a discussion of Victor Malarek's book, *The Natashas: The New Global Sex Trade*. Malarek, currently senior reporter with CTV's *W5* program is an award-winning (4 Michener Awards, and a Gemini Award) Canadian investigative journalist who has done extensive research in the field of human trafficking. This book is widely recognized as an excellent resource for anyone concerned about the human tragedy of the sex trade.
- Speak out against gender inequality—here at home and internationally. Support programs that address the oppression of women.
- Contact a local anti-trafficking group: give them an opportunity to speak to a group within your congregation. If there is no group operating locally, contact a national organization and ask them about how to start a group in your area.
- Lobby your members of parliament to continue their work to combat the trafficking of persons. Politicians and law enforcement agencies need to work together to establish and enforce laws that will stop the perpetrators of these crimes. They need to know that the public is aware and concerned.



Many of you will know the proverbial saying "What goes around, comes around." Members of the WMS and AMS recently experienced the "coming around" when a delegation of women from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) came to Canada to complete an exchange that was started more than two years ago. In April 2007, eight women from the WMS travelled to Taiwan and were received by the PCT. From October 2 to October 18, six women from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) travelled across Canada from BC to Halifax, meeting and sharing with WMS and AMS groups. We share a rich history and we hope that this exchange will strengthen the bond between our two women's organizations so that as we look toward the future, we can learn from each other about how mission has changed and how we can continue to strengthen the position of women in the two Presbyterian Churches.

The type, size, and setting of the events across Canada were all different but they all served the same purpose—to welcome and share with our sisters in Christ from Taiwan. Our visitors made presentations on Taiwan's culture, the role of women and the place of women's organizations within the PCT, and how the PCT works within its Aboriginal communities. During formal discussions and over meals or cups of tea, the Taiwanese women shared their stories about themselves, their

families, their faith, their church, and their country. The questions that were asked **of** our visitors could as easily have been asked **by** them: youth in the church, opportunities for women's leadership, raising children (most were mothers), being a female minister (two have been ordained), being a pastor's wife (four had married ministers).

A highlight of each of the presentations was a closing gift of song and dance. While group size or space limitations were sometimes challenging, whenever possible, our guests got WMS and AMS members dancing, while two very talented Aboriginal women from the group sang traditional worship songs.

The warmth of the Taiwanese people, the group's uplifting spirit, and the personal faith of each tour member helped make the Circles of Sharing tour a success. Each of our visitors left a piece of themselves with WMS and AMS members. Without the hospitality and giving spirit of our WMS members, the exchange would not have been possible. We hope the friendship between our two women's groups can be sustained and even strengthened.

While in British Columbia the group had the opportunity to gather with Mary Fontaine and some friends of Hummingbird Ministries.

After spending an evening presenting in Calgary, the group spent a day in Banff. Pictured, our guests with some WMS members and drivers.

A few days were spent with the Atlantic Mission Society. Their time was split between Halifax, Peggy's Cove, and Lunenburg.

Montreal hosted the group f
the Thanksgiving long weekend.
the help of the Taiwanese Ro
Campbell Presbyterian Church,
members enjoyed the group's co

Council Executive was pleased to spend an evening with the group. Laughter, gifts, cake, and songs were shared. Also while in Ontario, the group visited with the South Western and CNOB Synodicals.

For anyone visiting from
the George Leslie Mackay
Embro, ON is a mus

The circle goes around and around. The WMS was pleased and privileged to host our sisters in Christ from Taiwan for this turn of the circle.

Thanks from Taiwan:

Greetings from your sister in Jesus Christ in Taiwan! I would like to thank you for your kind invitation for our group to visit the WMS/AMS. We are very thankful for all your kindness and hospitality and the work you did in arranging a great schedule for us. The trip really brought us many wonderful and sweet memories.

Canada is a beautiful nation. The scenery was always fascinating. Your people are kind and gentle.

When we met our sisters and brothers in different cities and different churches we really felt the love of Jesus Christ from them even though we had never met before. It helped us to experience the true meaning of the scripture, "In Christ, we are many members but one body (1 Cor. 12:12)".

From our visit, we also came to understand from each other the situation of women in our churches. I am so pleased to hear that you have had female moderators in the general assembly and that two of them were not clergy. This encourages our women to continue our struggle toward gender justice for the women of the PCT.

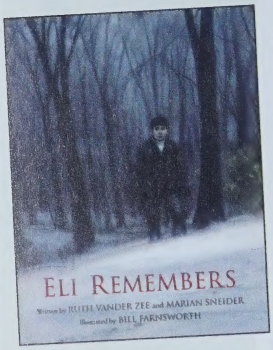
I was especially impressed by most of your elderly sisters who, despite their age, are full of energy, kindness, and joyfulness. They are so young at heart. Their lives are just like the trees planted by streams of water which yield their fruits in season and whose leaves do not wither.

Our women are facing the same problem, as the number of young women in our fellowship groups is gradually diminishing. We can ask for guidance about this issue when we pray.

Thank you for all you have done for us.

Book Reviews

***Eli Remembers* by Ruth Vander Zee and Marian Sneider**



Eli Remembers is a book about family, history, and identity. Eli is a Jewish boy who does not understand why his family is so sad when they light seven candles on the Jewish New Year. When he asks about it, his mom tells him that some things are too hard to talk about. Eli continues to be confused about his family's sadness until his family goes on a trip to Lithuania where his great-grandmother was born. There he discovers that seven of his relatives were killed in World War II.

This is a well-written book that reminds us of how important it is to remember both world history and the history of our own families. It teaches us that even in negative experiences, we can find blessings, and reminds us to pray for that. The illustrations by Bill Farnsworth are beautifully done and provide a complementary backdrop for the emotional writing.

Eli Remembers is a book that could open up helpful discussion of family struggles, but is not one that I would give to a child to read independently. The content of this book cuts to the heart; in many ways, its message is as much for the adults reading the book as for the children. As a teacher, I might use this in an older class (Grade 6 or 7) to lead into a discussion around Remembrance Day. As a parent, I believe that this would be a wonderful story to read with older children in order to lead into a discussion about the difficult things that have happened in the world, as well as the happy and sad memories from our own families.

Why is it important to remember? My guess is that we would all be surprised at the answers that our children would give us.

Reviewed by Amy Fonseca

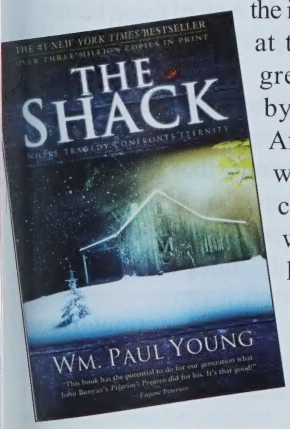
***The Shack* by William Paul Young**

The subtitle of this novel is *When Tragedy Confronts Eternity*. The author is the Canadian-born son of missionaries appointed to the former New Guinea. He wrote for what he envisioned as a small audience, including his six children. To his astonishment, the book became a bestseller, with three million copies in print and a possible movie deal in the works. It is a book not without controversy. While many have found it a stunning account of an encounter between a man in pain and his God, others consider it a trivialization of faith or even profane.

The story is centred on Mackenzie Allen Phillips, the father of a family whose members are all suffering in their own way after random violence

invaded their world. Nan, the mother, seems to have fared the best because of her relationship with her God, to whom she is so close that she refers to him as "Papa." But the passage of years has not lifted the weight of what he calls 'The Great Sadness' from Mackenzie's shoulders. He has become an emotionally frozen person, stuck in his guilt, pain, and anger at God.

On a bitter winter day that mirrors his heart, he finds in his mailbox an invitation to spend the weekend at a shack in the deep woods of Oregon. The letter is signed "Papa." It is at this early point in the novel that some readers are lost. An invitation in a mailbox from God is too improbable. Perhaps these readers have forgotten that the ways in which God is described in the Bible when communicating with his people are also somewhat arcane: burning bushes and pillars of fire and visiting angels. Those who are challenged but have persisted find that their difficulties are compounded when Mackenzie, having decided to accept the invitation, arrives at the shack to be greeted warmly by a large, jolly, African-American woman with great cooking skills, who introduces herself as "Papa." Some readers are genuinely offended by such a portrayal of God; others dismiss it as frivolous. Papa is only one of several persons present for the weekend. There is also a compassionate, outdoorsy young carpenter called "Jesus" and a comforting, shimmering, vaguely Eurasian, gardener called "Sarayu" ("Wind"). Mackenzie spends the weekend with this allegorical Trinity.


THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
OVER THREE MILLION COPIES IN PRINT
THE SHACK
WHERE TRAGEDY CONFRONTS ETERNITY
WM. PAUL YOUNG

It seems fair to say that the entire novel is an allegory. Mackenzie has been invited into the heart of God, and God is not as he imagined. Difficult as it is for some readers to accept the author's portrayal at first, one comes to realize that there are many people who cannot accept the more traditional vision of God as a bearded, white-haired old man. The Trinity is a difficult concept for anyone to grasp, and the author has taken an unfamiliar, but very contemporary route to deepen our understanding. This is liberating for some but confounding for others. For Mackenzie, the continuous conversations he holds with the Trinity figures help him to unload the weight of the emotional baggage he has been carrying for years. He grapples with theological conundrums in conversations over food or a fishing pole, and comes finally to understand the way in which the Trinity —the three absolutely interconnected aspects of God—comes to find us in the midst of our confusion and pain.

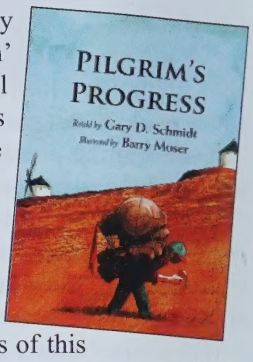
No doubt some will quarrel with the theological positions expressed in the book. In this novel, the author challenges traditional thinking with

creative, contemporary responses to age-old problems. If the author's answers help some people understand and feel closer to God, that is a good thing. If the questions raised by the images and the theology of *The Shack* start discussions, or send readers back to scripture to search for biblical images and statements of faith, that too is good.

Reviewed by Sandra Lane

***Pilgrim's Progress: A contemporary retelling* by Gary D. Schmitt, illustrated by Barry Moser**

Pilgrim's Progress is the retelling of the classic allegorical novel by John Bunyan. It is meant to stimulate and captivate the mind of those ages nine and up, and does so masterfully through its brilliant illustrations and dialogue. Initially, it reads like a fairy tale. Then, without warning, the writer draws you in and takes you on a journey from the 'City Of Destruction' to the 'Celestial City'. There is a thrilling sense of adventure, with important lessons learned along the way.



I eagerly turned the pages of this book, and reflected on how a lot of us could relate to Christian (the main character) through our own trials and tribulations in life. What I held in my hand was a guide book, something that renewed my hope in the Lord God and the promised land. It was a reminder that through faith in God, our burdens will always be easier to bear. I recommend this book not only for its exceptional presentation, but its teaching ability as well.

Reviewed by Cheryl Steeper

Refugee Study Supplementary Resources

If your WMS group is using the PCC study resources to learn about uprooted people, you may be interested in some supplementary materials. Any of these books will deepen your understanding of the experiences of refugee.

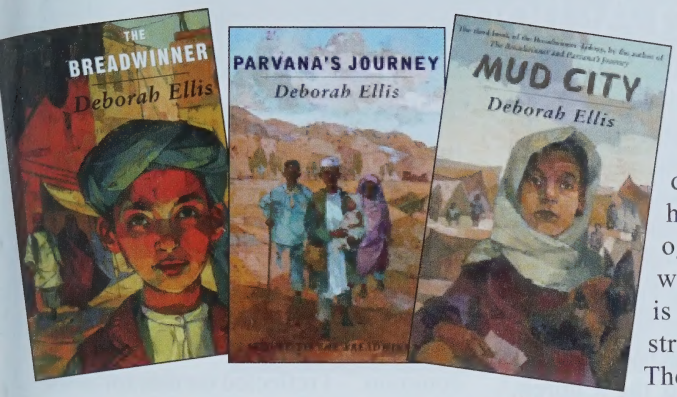
***The Breadwinner Trilogy:* Three books by Deborah Ellis**

Deborah Ellis writes for 'young adults'(generally students in Grade 7 and up) but adults will also find her books interesting and informative.

Parvana, 11 years old as the first novel opens, faces the problems of survival in a country that has known only war for more than her lifetime. Her father, injured in a bomb blast, is later imprisoned. Since Parvana is

WMS PCC THE Book Room

The Book Room
50 Wynford Drive,
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
416-441-1111 800-619-7301
bookroom@presbyterian.ca



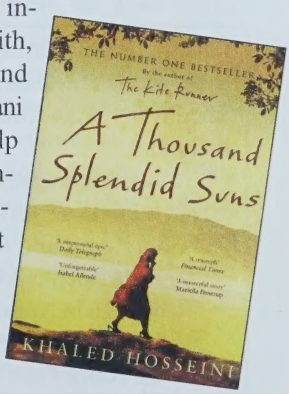
young enough to pass for a boy, she is the only one able to make enough money to keep the family of five fed. Eventually the family flees their home, and the second book in the trilogy begins.

The reality of war is present in these books, but the violence is implied more than described. The challenges are real, and realistically described: there is sorrow and fear and injustice, all of which make this a difficult topic for any of us, let alone young people. However, there is grace, and there is hope, and if the characters in the story won't give up, neither should we.

***A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini**

Marginalized by gender, circumstance of birth, physical condition, and poverty, the characters in this novel display fortitude, resilience, and ingenuity that might be unbelievable, if not for the graceful prose and the attention-grabbing plot that skillfully weaves all the lives and loves and politics together into a highly engaging story.

Instructive for its description of Afghan history, culture, and geography, this book is worth reading. But there is much more than instruction in this novel. The distorted theology of the extremist Taliban is part of the story, but moderate Islam is presented as well. The local Mullah speaks of the Koran in a way much like a Christian would speak of the bible. "He didn't always understand the Koran's words. But, he said, they comforted him, eased his heart. 'They'll comfort you too. You can summon them in your time of need, and they won't fail you. God's words will never betray you.'"



This novel's insights into the faith, the struggles, and the hopes of Afghani people will help any reader to understand the complexities of that particular country, and the grief, the fear, and the hopes of all who are uprooted by war.

All of the PCC resources related to refugee issues have been collected onto one page of the church's website. To view these resources, go to: www.presbyterian.ca/refugees

Mission in Action

Mary Fontaine, Director
Hummingbird Ministries

Hummingbird Ministries is embarking on a new project this year—the "Peace Through the Arts Project." This project will help us to realize our healing and reconciliation objective between Aboriginal people and the Church. We will hope that the project will also include non-church people as well. We are planning a series of Arts Workshops where people from different backgrounds (religious, spiritual, denominational, ecumenical, racial, social, etc.) will come together to share an experience of a common artistic form. It's an Aboriginal response to the Confession of the churches and the Government of Canada, to call people to peace with one another and with our planet.

At Hummingbird Ministries, we listen to the needs of the people, whether Aboriginal or otherwise. During visits to two of our churches in the Presbytery of Westminster, our program leaders heard people say that it was hard to connect with First Nations people: "We do not have much in common." I reflected on that for some time and tried to come up with ways to solve that problem.

After considering the history of Aboriginal people in North America, and the research I had done in this area, I realized that our people had been credited with what Earnest T. and Julia M. Seton, in their book *The Gospel of the Redman*, refer to as "having the science of relationships." Despite some territorial skirmishes, our traditional societies had great skills of diplomacy,

Hummingbird Ministries is a ministry of the Presbytery of Westminster dedicated to the work of reconciliation and healing between Canada's Aboriginal People and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The objectives of the Hummingbird Ministries include:

- To restore, where desired, traditional values held sacred by Aboriginal people, such as those reflected in the legend of the hummingbird and the crane, by recognizing and identifying them together in the Circle.
- To have open talking circles and contextual Bible studies.
- To engage in Aboriginal Christian Theological dialogue to help overcome some of the existing barriers.
- To introduce First Nations music and culture in worship in Presbyterian churches in the Lower Mainland.
- To build upon and strengthen the Hummingbird Ministries Council through training for both staff and volunteers for the purpose of attaining our goals.

and were able to make peace. The authors used the Iroquois Confederacy as a prime example of diplomacy, noting that it was used as a basis for the Constitution of the United States. I also did further studies on the Treaty Six negotiations, which led Alexander Morris (Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba from 1873–1877) to make note of the high regard he had for the Cree and their way of including all our members in the decision to make a treaty with the Crown. The Setons talk about "Indians having this great will to peace that they had not seen anywhere else."

I am convinced that our people still have what it takes to lead people to a place of peace. It will take time and effort for some of us to realize this potential but I have observed that the values of forgiveness, patience, and long-suffering are still evident among our people. That will to peace which the Setons talked about is still here. This could be one way in which First Nations can respond to the "What now?" questions which came after the apologies of the Federal Government and the Churches.

In this project, Aboriginal people will lead the process but will need the support of other Peacemakers from among the nations of the world. Every one of the workshops we are scheduling will begin with a circle of peace —to consider what we have in common, give thanks for what we have, and convince ourselves that we can indeed work together for our common good, beginning with an artistic form that we have in common. Some of the art forms, which come from many different cultures, include musical instrument playing, singing, drumming, dancing, carving, and quilting.

Hummingbird staff and volunteers are matching up various groups of people, congregations with First Nations groups, Christians, and non-Christians. In one exciting effort, we have a volunteer from the Young Peoples Opera Society who is interested in bringing pow wow dances, drumming, and drama together in conjunction with the Opera Society. Another of the matches we have at this point include a Catholic First Nations choir with a Presbyterian choir. We also have groups within the Taiwanese and Chinese communities in Vancouver who are interested in participating in this project.

We are hopeful that this project will help us to realize our goal of bringing reconciliation among different peoples.

Rev. Stewart Folster,
Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry
October, 2009

Since our last report*, we have spent a lot of time doing repairs and renovations to our new building on 20th Street in Saskatoon. We installed a new furnace and air conditioner in our drop-in centre and also in our worship space. It was great to have a cool space to do our work in the summer and we look forward to reliable heating during the deep-freeze of winter.

We continue to feed about 200 homeless people each day that we are open. We have modified our hours a little. Now we are serving sandwiches from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 4:20 p.m., every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Donuts and coffee are available anytime between 11:30 a.m. and 4:20 p.m. This gives us time to take a breather and to catch up on our cleaning and making of coffee and juice. It also makes our budget a little more manageable. However, we are still spending about $600 per week on food (which does not include the cost of utensils, cups, paper towels, and tissue paper, etc.). We also offer soup every Friday and we feed people from the street on Sundays after worship service. Sunday worship is from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. I am getting pretty good at learning how to make soup for 200 people. It gives me a good sense of accomplishment.

At the present time, I am the only paid staff at SNCM. We have the funding to hire another staff worker for one year but we have not been able to find anyone to fill that position. We are looking for a student

minister (someone who can do all parts of the ministry when I am away for any length of time).

It's amazing but sad to see how the homeless folks have learned to survive by sleeping outdoors in all kinds of prairie weather. I cannot imagine how they can live in a tent along the river when the snow begins to fall. One fellow was telling us about how he has many visitors at night. There was a pack of coyotes that were coming to check and see if he had any food to spare in his tent. He said it was quite an experience to hear them howling right beside his tent. He wanted to know if I had anything warm for him to wear so that he could get a better sleep at night. The temperature had begun to dip below zero as the snow began to fall. I found him an old pair of fleece-lined blue jeans. I also gave him scarves and a woolen hat and mitts that the ladies had donated from the knitters club at St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal. He was very grateful for everything. I hope that the folks who read this report can keep my friends in mind when they come across socks and blankets and winter jackets they no longer need. My homeless friend wanted me to see if I could find him a winter jacket. He said the coyotes were a little too fast for him to make a nice warm jacket from their fur!

As hard as it is to imagine sleeping in a tent, we should remember that not everyone who is homeless is lucky enough to have even a tent. Some people sleep under the bush somewhere or they sleep under the bridges. Of course, in those situations, there is always the risk of being chased away by the police. I have heard some people comment that these people will not stay in a shelter that is offered to them. But the truth is, there is no shelter available for many of these people in Saskatoon.

Please pray for us. Pray that we will find someone to fill our second staff position. Pray that we will continue to be blessed with financial support, and pray for me and for our volunteers, that we may work safely and with the energy and good health that are needed. God bless all of you as you continue to bring the good news of Christ's love to the world.

**For more information about SNCM and their new building, check* We are in this together *which was distributed to all WMS groups in the Fall mailing.*

Joseph Taylor
Executive Director
Evangel Hall Mission

In my work at Evangel Hall Mission (EHM) I am often reminded of the parable of 'The Rich Man and Lazarus'. Lazarus simply wanted something from the excess the rich man had, but was denied even this. The rich man, whose purple cloak indicates that he was probably from the noble class, likely thought of Lazarus as an irritant, and treated him as if he was invisible. Most likely the rich man was contemptuous

Overseas Staff Birthdays

February

19 - Jae Lee, South Korea

March

31 - Michael Tai, Taiwan

of Lazarus, thinking of him as a scoundrel and sinner, responsible for his own fate and being punished by God. This was the accepted understanding and religious thinking of the time.

Have our attitudes and beliefs changed much over the past 2000 years? Homeless people still want to satisfy their physical and emotional hunger with what is left over from our consumer society. In our culture, status comes from functionality; people who have knowledge and expertise command economic power—they are the nobility of our age.

Those without marketable skills, leadership qualities, or the ability to enhance economic output are considered of little value in contemporary society. They are the Lazarus of our time, stripped of dignity, devalued, and forced to the margins of the social order. They are often seen but not perceived, heard but not understood, tolerated but not welcomed—left to live and die an isolated and lonely existence.

On the margins of society, every day is a struggle for basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, and safety. Because of their low social and economic status, people who lack stable housing experience high rates of disease and mortality. 'At-risk' people face significant barriers in accessing adequate medical and dental care. Lack of identification, mental illness, shortage of family doctors, and the high cost of dental care have made it almost impossible for many people on the street to receive the care that they require. This leads to many more health issues, as well as higher mortality rates than the general population. Specifically, many persons on the street suffer from:

- Mental illness, including affective disorders such as depression, schizophrenia and personality disorders
- HIV, respiratory tract, and other infections which exacerbate poor health
- Poorly controlled chronic medical conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease
- Poor oral and dental hygiene, having no access to dental care until teeth are extracted

At EHM, we see these problems every day; in fact a survey in our drop-in and residence revealed that 65% of participants had not visited a doctor or dentist in the previous five years and an additional 20% had only one visit. A shocking total of 8 in 10 persons are without access to primary health and dental care!

In response to this critical need in our community, EHM constructed a free dental and medical clinic in 2008. Since then, we have provided treatment for hundreds of community members who come to us seeking help. As word spread throughout the city about our free clinic, we have experienced a dramatic increase in the number of people requesting our services.

Many of the individuals who come to the dental clinic are so overjoyed after their visit that they run to one of our EHM staff and say with a big smile: "Want to see my teeth?" It is heartwarming to see the difference this service makes in their life.

Greg, age 54, was one of the first patients at the dental clinic. He hadn't been to a dentist for 40 years and had been chewing on one side of his mouth for a year and a half. When a volunteer dentist at EHM first helped him, he wept. "It doesn't make sense that government money flows mainly to emergency clinics that pull teeth," he said. "Everybody gets paid and I lose my teeth. At Evangel Hall Mission, they reverse that."

For more information about the Health and Dental Clinic, visit www.evangel-hall.ca.

Nagy Emese
Protestant Theological Institute
Eastern Europe

Nagy Emese, theological student at the Protestant Theological Institute, preached at a service attended by a

Merci! Gracias! Zikomo!
Thank You WMS!
from Presbyterian World Service & Development

PWS&D would like to thank our friends from the WMS for your generous support of our 2009 development and relief activities around the world.

Your prayers and financial support enables life-changing programs to reach thousands of people. The PWS&D team and our global partners thank you for answering the call to share Christ's love around the world.

PWS&D Staff and Committee

PWS&D

group of AMS members who toured Eastern Europe in June 2009. What follows is an excerpt from her sermon.

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 90:12

The psalmist realizes that our life is too short. Life passes quickly, and we lose chances that never come back. His prayer asks the Lord to teach us to number our days aright—to be aware of the passing time and the shortness of our lives. There are so many opportunities in life. How can we have the time and the strength to take advantage of all of them?

We might ask why it is important for us to be aware of the brevity of our time. The answer is so that we can gain a heart of wisdom. We don't have to take advantage of every opportunity. We can rely on God's leadership. If we ask for God's help in our lives, we do the right things. When we get to the end of our days, we will be able to say: "I can close my eyes forever with satisfaction because when someone was alone, I was present with them; when somebody needed help, I offered my hands; I had chances to talk about God and love and salvation, and many people were touched and lives were saved by these words."

Gabriel García Márquez, author of the novel *100 Years of Loneliness*, wrote to a friend about the importance of living fully:

If I knew today that I see you for the last time, I would hold you strong, I would say 'I love you' and I wouldn't add folly 'you know that'... Don't wait longer! Do what you can today, because if tomorrow never comes, you will be sorry for the time when you didn't have time for a smile, an embrace, a kiss, or when you were too busy to accomplish a last request.

In Memoriam

Members of the WMS community were surprised and deeply saddened by the sudden death of **Gloria Wasacase** on October 13, 2009. Gloria's connection with the WMS dates back to 1959, when she started what would become her ten-year appointment to the staff of the Cecelia Jeffery Residential School in Kenora, ON. Gloria met and married her husband there, and they continued to live at the school with their young family. After moving to southern Ontario, Gloria stayed involved with the Native community of the Six Nations area.

Gloria's relationship with the WMS also continued as she became involved with her local group, Presbyterial, Synodical, and eventually Council Executive. Able to enjoy the moment and to envision the future, Gloria brought warmth, insight, and strong faith to all parts of her life. She is fondly remembered by family, friends, former students, and her WMS colleagues in faith.

Mary Jack, wife of the late Rev. James Jack, long-time WMS member, life-time servant of the Lord and the church, died June 16, 2009. Serving with her husband, Mary was a lively member of communities in Hartney, Manitoba, Stayner, Sunnidale Corners, Cobourg, and Leaside, Ontario. Mary is sadly missed by her children Jim (& Lisa), Anne (&Bob) Manning, Rev. Helen (& Rev. Bob) Smith, and Rev. Elizabeth Jack (& Rev. Bruce Clendening), her 12 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

Mary served the WMS at every level, including Synodical President and Trustee, as well as serving on the PCC Board of Evangelism and Social Action. She was always interested in people, and lived as a vibrant witness to the dignity and value of every person. Her warm wit and her cheerful nature helped her reach out and make everyone feel welcome. We give thanks for her service and her faith.

Correction:

In the Nov/Dec 09 issue of *Glad Tidings*, Rufus Wainwright was given credit for writing the song "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother." In fact, the lyrics of the song were written by Bob Russell. We apologize for any confusion caused by this mistake.

Synodical
Saskatchewan

Forty-four women ranging in age from teens to 80+ enjoyed a laughter-filled weekend at Camp Christopher. The weather was exceptional for the second weekend in September in northern Saskatchewan.

This was the 25th ladies camp. Irene Soderlund has looked after the registration and finances for all 25 camps! Other workers at the first camp were Irene and Kathleen McGillvary, and Marg Atkinson (who was Synodical President at the time). Originally designed to provide an extra fellowship opportunity to supplement regular WMS meetings, the camp continues to bring women from across the province together to develop and deepen relationships.

'Celebrating New Beginnings' was the weekend theme. The guest speaker was Moira Brownlee, who shared stories about the people she helps to find a new beginning in her work with COSA (Circle of Support and Accountability) —a program of the Mennonite Central Committee of Alberta. Our devotional times, Bible study, and Saturday workshops were centred on new beginnings. A new approach to Sunday worship, led by Rev. Gwen Ament, left a lasting memory. Lots of singing time was led by the music of a drum and guitars played by Rev. Gwen Ament, Rev. Amanda Currie, and Jen Bell.

It was great to see some ladies who were able to return for this special occasion. Bev Shepansky is now back in Saskatchewan, and she was very involved in the planning committee. Geri Laing blessed us all by volunteering as cook for the weekend, giving the rest of us the chance to enjoy free time swimming, canoeing, hiking, or joining in activities organized by the planners.

Anyone able to be in Saskatchewan for the weekend after Labour Day next year is welcome to join the group at the Provincial Presbyterian Camp.

Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Here are some brief notes from the October Synodical Meeting held in Thunder Bay.

Members of Superior Presbyterial reported on last May's Council meeting. They also reported that 14 members were present at their first regular meeting of September.

Two women from First Church were excited about the workshop/Bible camp led by Rev. Margaret Mullin, held recently at Keeseekoowenin. The theme for this event was "In God's Hands."

There are four active auxiliaries in Winnipeg and one in Portage la Prairie. Most of the groups enjoy the study materials prepared by the national office.

A joint Presbyterial/Presbytery event was held in October with Shama Mall, Deputy Director of Church World Service in Afghanistan/Pakistan. She was in Winnipeg for the Canadian Food Grains Bank meeting.

Presbyterial

Westminster Presbyterial

On September 23, 41 women and 3 guests gathered at Coquitlam Church, New Westminster BC, for the Presbyterial Fall Rally. The theme for the day was "Go Tell the Story." Agnes Manthorpe, a member of the Coquitlam Church, led devotions and read the story in Luke 10:38–42 of Martha and Mary.

After prayer by President Beth, the group recited the WMS mission statement. In preparation for the next mission study on refugees, the book "Christians at the Border" was reviewed.

The morning speaker, Mary Gorombey, works in the Reformed Church in Hungary and is supported by Presbyterians Sharing. Her work is with refugees, especially teenagers, to whom she provides support and counselling. Her PowerPoint presentation provided excellent background information both about Hungary and its history of invasion and control by foreign armies, and about the refugee situation. The Hungarian people's hostility toward and suspicion of refugees becomes more understandable in light of their history.

The afternoon speaker was Margaret Powers, a member of Coquitlam Church and the author of the poem "Footprints"

The WMS ladies of Knox, Manotick, brought their knitting contribution to the Fall Retreat of the Quebec and Eastern Ontario Synodical. Since April 2004, Margaret Reynolds, of Morrisburg, has collected enough vests, toques, bootees, dolls, and blankets to send 91 large boxes of goods to hospitals in Malawi, India, and El Salvador.

which is known to many throughout the world. Supported by her husband, who operated a PowerPoint presentation, she spoke about the work they do through two organizations—"Little Peoples' Ministry" and "Footprints in the Sand." Over the past 43 years they have been in 37 countries teaching and evangelizing. They have a particular interest in children and spoke about a recent trip to Colombia.

The Presbyterial was pleased to welcome to the meeting the Rev. Bushra Cheema, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan. She and her husband Emmanuel, also a minister, were forced to flee Pakistan because of threats of violence. They have made connections with South East Asians living in the Fraser valley, about 60 of whom are meeting for worship in a Presbyterian church in Surrey, close to Vancouver.

Ann Friesen

Eleanor Gairdiner, 95-year-old WMS Honorary Life Member from West Flamborough Church is pictured here with the 32 baby toques and some vests that she knitted this year. Other members of the Hamilton Presbyterial have also been busy, enough so that four boxes of knitted goods have been shipped to Malawi and India.

Huron-Perth Presbyterial

Members of the Huron-Perth Presbyterial gathered at Camp Kintail for their Fall Rally on October 8. Camp Director Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee welcomed the ladies and led a morning program based on the theme 'Creation'. Small groups were formed to discuss the differences between their own childhood summer activities and those of their grandchildren. Stations were set up representing each of the seven days of Creation as described in Genesis, and the members did an exercise representing each day. Similar to the program for summer campers, each exercise stressed the importance of caring for the environment.

Ruth Hart, from North Easthope, described several books and supplies available at the Book Table.

Jonathan Lee explained that most of the food for summer camps comes from local farms and Farmers Markets. He also provided a delicious lunch of quiche and apple crisp.

The afternoon program began with a singsong led by Kintail staff. The devotion on the Rally Theme 'A Living Sanctuary' was presented by Ruth Laing from Mitchell, assisted by Pat White from Goderich. Members responded to the roll call by naming a favourite sanctuary.

The President, Bernice Richards, from Stratford, read a thank-you letter

received after the group's bus trip and delivery of needed articles to Evangel Hall in Toronto. Various events were announced, including the Synodical pot-luck lunch with the group of women visiting from Taiwan.

Sarnia Presbyterial

"Always Thankful" was the theme for the Fall Rally of the Sarnia Presbyterial hosted by Laurel-Lea-St. Matthew's Church, Sarnia, on Oct. 22, 2009. Forty-three members attended the meeting. The group was welcomed by Rev. Joyce Hodgson. Local President Sophie Jackson and Presbyterial President Marilyn Rawson offered greetings to everyone. A delicious lunch of homemade soup, sandwiches, and cake was catered by the ladies of the church and enjoyed by all. Joan Wagner reviewed some of the books for sale from The Book Room in Toronto. A sing-along was held in the Sanctuary.

Various announcements were shared, including notice of the Annual Meeting which will be held on Thursday March 25 (snow date Fri. March 26) in Strathroy—where the theme will be "Brighter Visions," and the Synodical meeting scheduled for April 20 and 21, 2010 in Hamilton.

The guest speaker for the meeting was Margaret McGillivray, one of the participants in last year's Mission Awareness Tour to Eastern Europe. She narrated a very interesting slide presentation of their tour. They visited the schools that our WMS groups continue to support by collecting money for school supplies that will help keep these schools open and viable.

The closing worship service, based on Psalm 121, was led by members from Laurel-Lea-St. Matthew's.

Beverly Cassel

Lanark and Renfrew Presbyterial

The Lanark and Renfrew Fall Presbyterial meeting took place at Knox Presbyterian Church in Westport on September 21, 2009. President Lottie Sutherland welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting with prayer followed by recitation of the WMS purpose. A special welcome was made to Mary Nichols, a retired long-time missionary of India and Nepal. After a hymn was sung, the ladies of Arnprior led the devotions 'What does the Lord require of you?' based on Micah 6:8 and Mark 7:24–29. The minutes of the June meeting were read by the secretary, Judy Postma, and adopted as read. During the announcements Lottie read a thank you letter from Linda Inglis for the 50 comfort dolls which had been sent to Malawi. The president then reviewed the 125 years of history of the WMS in Lanark & Renfrew starting with the first missionary from Smiths Falls, Dr. Margaret O'Hara, who went to India in 1841. By 1935, there were 16 mission bands. In 1947, Mary Nichol was designated. It was a very interesting chronological record of significant events of the WMS. The offering was dedicated and grace said for the hearty meal made by the Westport ladies.

continued on page 43

Forward in Faith

An Update on Our "Together We Can" Projects

At the annual Council Meeting in May 2008, the "Together We Can" projects were launched. Since then individuals, groups, and Presbyterials have been diligently raising money for these two unique ventures.

The "School Supplies for Eastern Europe" project supports the work of Christian Schools that are under the care of David Pandy-Szekeres. The schools do receive some support from the government of Ukraine but more funding is needed. David spends quite a bit of energy trying to generate funds needed to keep the doors of the schools open with teachers' salaries and operating costs paid. This leaves the children lacking school supplies that in Canada we consider basic necessities.

WMS members have been asked to raise funds for school supplies needed for children attending these schools. As of October 31, 2009, we have raised $38,700. We have already sent $35,000 to David.

In addition to this fundraising effort, in May 2009, the Council voted to send an additional $50,000 to David to assist in covering the actual school expenses. A total of $20,000 was sent in the spring and $30,000 was sent in October, once we determined that the schools were open for the Fall term.

The "Build a Hostel for the Jobat School (India)" project came about after members of the WMS became aware that boarding students attending the Jobat School have very unsatisfactory lodgings. A number of years ago, a hostel was built in Amkhut and the same is needed at Jobat. We have estimated the cost to be about $150,000. When completed, the building will provide comfortable accommodation for both boys and girls.

As of October 31, 2009, we have raised $109,163 for this project. At Council Executive in October, it was agreed that at least 80% of the cost should be raised before we actually begin to build. Since Spring is the optimum time for laying the foundation, our May Council Meeting will be the time for us to decide whether we have enough money to proceed this year. Funds for these projects that are received after May will still be added to the accounts.

Thank you very much for all the support so many of you have given to each project over the last year and a half. It is very much appreciated. Please keep each of these important projects in your prayers as we work to support them.

Janet Brewer
Treasurer

The afternoon began with the singing of 'We've a story to tell to the nations'. A CD prepared for the meeting of the General Assembly by Lottie's son, Angus Sutherland, was played and we enjoyed the PWS&D song. Barb Summers of PWS&D was the guest speaker. Barb explained that PWS&D is a separate ministry from Presbyterians Sharing. Its task is to work with partner churches and agencies to overcome disaster and poverty. PWS&D supports community development, income security, literacy, healthcare (including the fight against AIDS), access to clean water, and other efforts to improve the standard of living, in over 30 countries around the world. There has been a significant decrease in givings and $1.5 million is urgently needed now. A special offering was collected and given to Barb to deliver to PWS&D. Barb was thanked by Delcy Marchand for her inspiring and animated presentation. The meeting closed with the benediction.

Vivian Young

Brockville Presbyterial

October 20 was a beautiful Fall day that saw members of the Brockville Presbyterial meet at St. Andrew's, Spencerville. Margaret Reynolds welcomed speaker Mary Gorombey, a Canadian of Hungarian background, currently home on furlough from Hungary. In Budapest, Mary serves the Reformed Church in Hungary, on appointment by International Ministries of the PCC. The Reformed Mission Centre assists people who are addicts, blind, or homeless, as well as serving as a marriage and family therapy centre.

Mary works in schools set up for refugees, who tend to be women and children under 18 and who are escaping persecution in their native land. Preschool teachers' aides are trained and youth are prepared to enter the Hungarian school system, particularly by receiving language instruction in Hungarian. Another service offered by the church is a housing integration program that is set up with apartments and utilities free for one year. Skills for coping with life in a different culture are taught. Mary tutors students; oversees distribution of money for transit, school supplies and clothing; and provides social support and counselling. She credits her co-workers and grateful graduates for the success of the program.

Mary was congratulated for her dedication to her call to mission where 'Opportunity Knocks'.

Donna Wilson

Montreal Presbyterial

The Fall meeting was held on October 3 at St. Andrew's Church in St. Lambert, QC. Anita Mack gave a history of the church which dates back to 1881. The 'new' building was erected in 1927. Host minister Rev. Dr. Barry Mack led a worship service based on Romans 14:13–20, 'Living Faith, Our Mission'. Steve Gilson was the pianist.

Pictured after the service on Mission Awareness Sunday at Chippawa, Niagara Falls, are Heather Smith, Eileen Spring, Annabelle Ovens, Linda Shaw, and Rev. Doug Schonberg. Linda Shaw was the speaker for the service, and showed slides from the time she and her husband, Rev. Ian Shaw, spent working in Guyana. As a Christian educator, Linda strengthened the Sunday School programming and trained leaders. The congregation at Chippawa was enlightened by her first hand report of the situation in Guyana.

Regular business included reports from the secretary and treasurer. Lois Klempa gave a book report. Grace Thorney-Brown and her sister Jean Komosi gave a very interesting presentation on their trip "Following the steps of Paul."

After a delicious lunch and an exercise break (led by Peggy Wegrich) Anita shared information about life at Camp d'action biblique in Richmond, QC. Barbara Summers, Communication Coordinator for PWS&D was guest speaker for the meeting.

Lorna Smith

Local

St. Andrew's, Huntsville

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Huntsville WMS celebrated their 110th Anniversary at the Sunday morning service on October 17. Members of the group were introduced to the congregation, and a short history of the group was related. After the service there was a display table and refreshments were served in the Goforth Fellowship Hall.

St. Andrew's has a rich mission heritage. One of Canada's first and foremost missionaries was Jonathon Goforth who came to Muskoka as a

Knox College student minister in 1881. He visited hundreds of homes, often walking more than 12 miles a day in his mission field which included Huntsville, Brunel, Aspidin, and Port Sydney. After his graduation from Knox College, the congregation and the community at large remained interested in news of his years in China, Manchuria, and Korea. His story is one that is still read by people of all ages and we are pleased that our Fellowship Hall is named in his honour.

The WMS group was established in 1899 when Mrs. MacVicar, the Minister's wife, became our first President. During the past 110 years, this group of women has been instrumental in organizing the Sunday School, Children's Clubs, and The World Day of Prayer Service in Huntsville. The group continues to meet on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month for worship, Bible study, and discussion of local and global missions. This month we were pleased to have Astrid Wahl as our guest speaker regarding the work she and Harry have done in Central Europe.

Arvina Bennett

Knox, North Easthope

On Tuesday, October 20, Knox, North Easthope WMS celebrated the group's 125th Anniversary with a special worship service and reception. Rev. Dr. Andrew Fullerton was the speaker. Greetings were received from neighbouring Presbyterials, the Southwestern Ontario Synodical, and the WMS Council.

Pictured are Honorary Life Members Isabelle Satchell, Florence Fawcett, Isabel Patterson, Christina Fryfogle, Helen Walker, and Jean Fryfogel.

The WMS group of St. Andrew's, Southampton met in October at Kelso Villa Retirement Lodge, in Owen Sound. The meeting included a birthday celebration for Kae Soden, group member and lodge resident. Everyone wore a hat and gave its history for roll call. A social time followed the meeting. Pictured (back) Ruth Beattie, Jean Fitzgerald, Mary Jane Salter, Robbie Davis, Pamela Wright, Joyce Stow, (front) Rev. Creola Simpson, Sheila Lamb, Kae Soden, Linda Doll, Marion Otto. Absent: Carol Mackowski.

Children attending the Knox, Bracebridge/St. David's, Vankoughnet Vacation Bible School raised more than $250 for the 'Together We Can' School Supplies for Eastern Europe project.

At the June meeting of the Trinity-York Mills WMS, the group celebrated their 45th anniversary. Pictured cutting the cake are current president Kathy Keltie and the group's first president (1964), Betty Worthington. Lindsay Hepburn, from the Education for Mission Department of the national PCC, was guest speaker at the event.

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

Thank you to the *Glad Tidings* secretaries and contact persons who diligently update the subscription lists and collect the payments each year. Special thanks to those who have added new subscribers to their list! We appreciate your efforts to return the subscription lists to our office in good time.

At a recent meeting of the Editorial Committee, we discussed some ideas about how to promote the magazine. These include:

- encouraging groups to purchase a subscription (or two or three) for the congregation. These could be put in the church library, passed around to different members, or given to visitors or newcomers to the church.
- considering gift subscriptions. Possible recipients include a young person who is going away to university, someone planning to go on a Youth in Mission trip, or a person who might spearhead a church school mission project.

Any time is a good time to promote *Glad Tidings*. Subscriptions can be started any time, not just in the Fall.

For the sight impaired: due to changes in technology, we expect that we will be changing the format of the audio version of *Glad Tidings*. Currently we send the magazine out on cassette tapes. It is getting increasingly difficult to obtain cassettes, so we are investigating the switch to CD format. If you know of anyone who would be interested in receiving the audio version of *Glad Tidings*, please let us know.

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing the information and articles from *Glad Tidings* is a great way to remind people of the work of the WMS and the mission community that serves our church. When you have finished reading your copy, share:

- "Palestinian Christians and the Challenges of Today" with a senior high or university student. This is just one example of the kind of opportunity available through Youth in Mission.
- "Mission in Action" with your mission and outreach committee convenor. Knowing more about the various missions that serve our inner cities, and that work for reconciliation with Aboriginal people can help congregations consider new ways to respond to the needs.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Florence Cox
St. Andrew's, Allenford, ON

Mina McKenzie
Alexandra Presbyterian,
Brantford, ON

Julia Dimopoulos
Joan Allan
Marie Douglas Group
Gordon Presbyterian,
Burnaby, BC

Elizabeth Garlisch
St. Andrew's, Carleton
Place, ON

Jean Abrams
Marce. L Wood Aux,
St. Andrew's, Cobourg, ON

Shirley Mills
St. Andrew's, Hanover, ON

Ruby Didman
Sarah Dunning Aux
Knox, Dundas, ON

Mary Porter
St. Andrew's, Ottawa, ON

Mary Tihanyi
St. Andrew's, Kitchener, ON

Mary Maclean
St. Andrew's, Lethbridge,
AB

Helen Callum
New St. James, London, ON

Grace Rutledge
Mary Nicholson
Semper Fidelis WMS
Knox, Agincourt, Toronto,
ON

Hazel Spangler
St. Andrew's, New
Liskeard, ON

Rose Reidt
Annie Purves WMS
St. Paul's, Port Hope, ON

Barbara Rivers
First Presbyterian,
Seaforth, ON

Mary Sutherland
North Caradoc—
St. Andrew's, Strathroy, ON

Monica Cameron
Fraser Presbyterian,
Tottenham, ON

Evelyn Barden
Jeannette Montgomery
Eden Mills, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

Livestock Programs Bring New Life

PWS&D is working with partners in Malawi and around the world to bring new futures of hope for people in need. Livestock programs are helping families improve their nutrition and increase their household income. Please help us continue this important work. Support PWS&D today.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

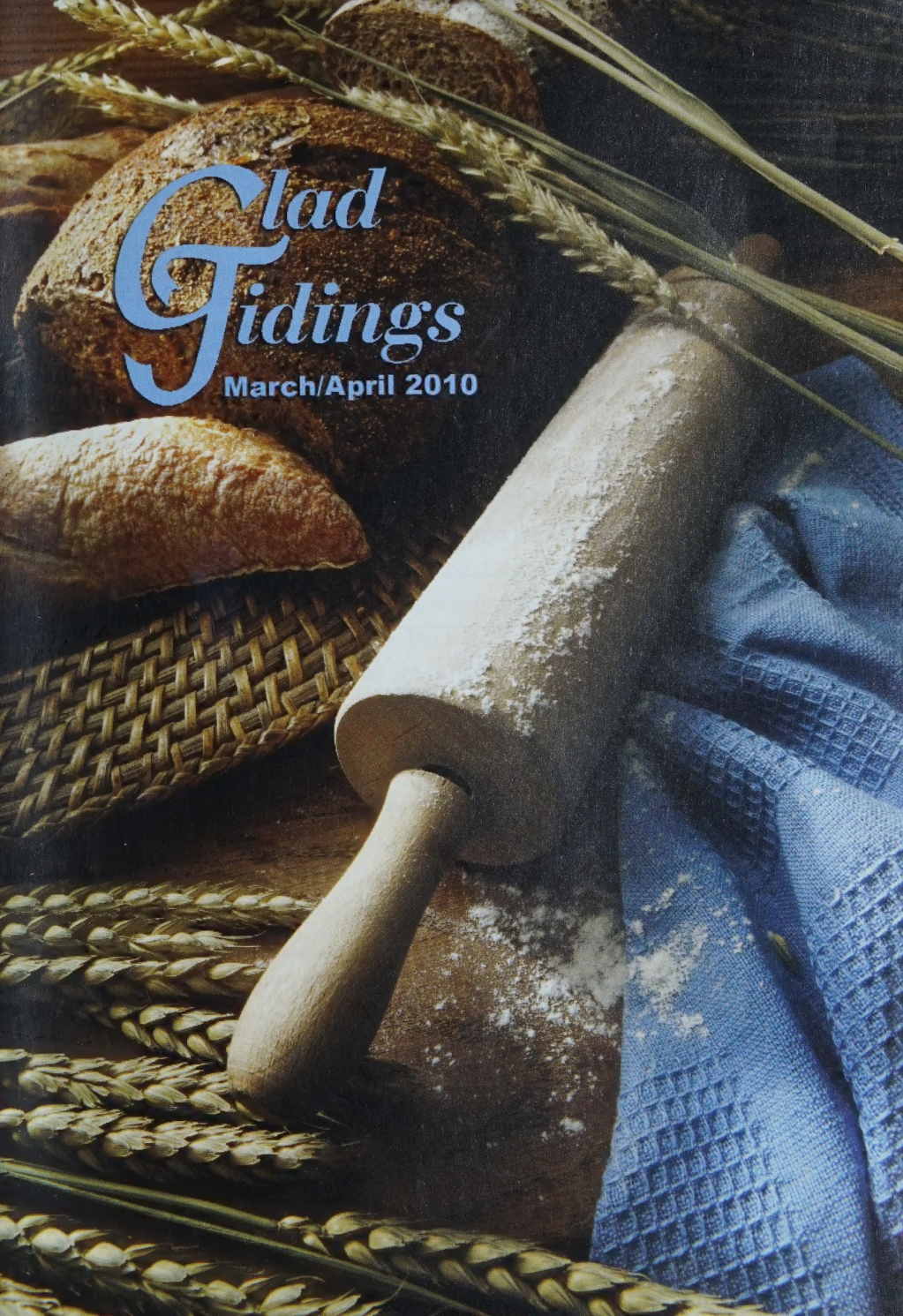
The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

1-800-619-7301 ext. 291

www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address


Glad Tidings
March/April 2010

Contents

Features

Bread: More Than Life itself

L. June Stevenson

Page 4

WWJD: What Would Jesus Drink?

Michelle Ball

Page 9

13 **Love Like Breathing**..... *Mark D. Willians*

19 **Hope Across the Border**..... *Joan Greer*

26 **Mary Knew**..... *Rev. Margaret Robertson*

30 **Freedom**..... *Marion MacInnis*

Regulars

3 **From the Editor's Desk**.....

33 **Book Reviews**.....

36 **Mission in Action**.....

40 **In the Society**.....

43 **WMS Officers and Executive Memebers**

44 **Forward in Faith**.....

46 **Circulation News**.....

47 **Pass Me Along**.....

47 **In Remembrance**.....

Give us this day, our daily bread.

~Matt 6:11

Glad Tidings

March/April 2010
Volume 86, No. 2

INTERIM EDITOR
HEATHER JONES
DESIGN
PAT MARTIN
CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

Published six times a year by the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to the circulation department at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Phone (416) 441-1111. Fax (416) 441-2825. E-mail Editorial gladtidings@presbyterian.ca. Circulation kallen@presbyterian.ca. Publications mail registration number 09517. ISSN: 00170720.

We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Canada

Member of the Canadian Church Press and the Associated Church Press.

Subscription rate $14.00 including G.S.T. per year. Single copies $2.40. WMS members should send their subscriptions through their group *Glad Tidings* Secretary. Individual subscribers may order direct from *Glad Tidings*. Please make all money orders and cheques payable at par to *Glad Tidings*.

Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Heather Jones

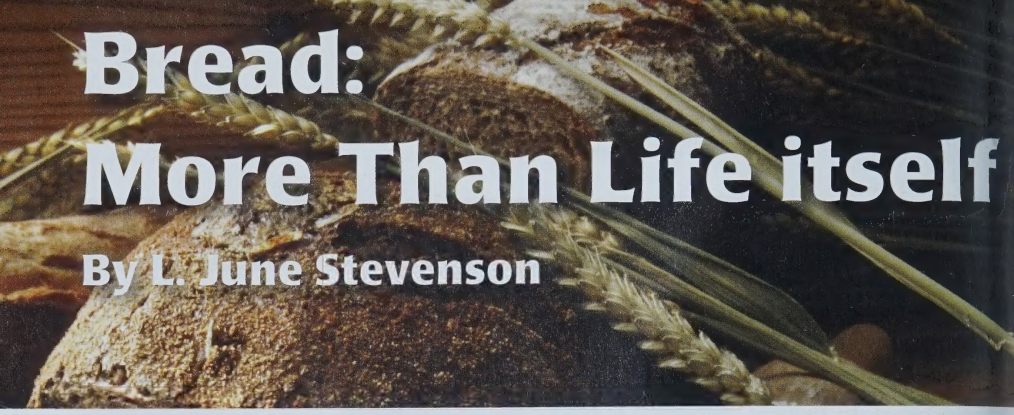
From the Editor's Desk

I continue to be fascinated by how the issues of *Glad Tidings* come together, with themes emerging almost organically. It was some months ago that June Stevenson shared her reflections on bread with me, and I remember thinking that Easter would be a good time to use the piece. One of my favourite parts of the Easter story is the walk to Emmaus. It is in the breaking of the bread that Cleopas and his companion recognize the risen Christ. For me, it is in this story that the bread of life and the Word of God come together. The Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us transformed our staple food into a symbol of God's continuing presence with us.

We do not live by bread **alone**, but we do need bread to live. There are other basic necessities of life that are reflected in the stories on these pages. Although I'm not a coffee-drinker myself, I know that for many people the morning cup of coffee is at least as much of a dietary staple as bread. We are called to live by the word of God, but bread and our favourite beverage (tea for me, please) are part of our daily lives. Michelle Ball helps us to remember that even as we consume these basic elements of daily life, our consumption has impact on the daily lives of others who are also children of God.

Mark Williams encourages us to learn to live so that loving others comes as naturally to us as breathing. Our goal is to be like the sheep in Matthew, chapter 25, who care for others so naturally that, when called to account for their actions, they don't even realize that they have been serving the Lord.

We give thanks to God for our daily bread, and for all of the necessities and luxuries of life that we are privileged to enjoy. It my hope, and my prayer, that the articles in this magazine will help you to deepen your understanding of the connection between our faith and our daily living. May we all live in ways that bring love and abundant life to all people and all of creation.



Bread: More Than Life itself

By L. June Stevenson

"John, Peter, come here," Jesus called. The two disciples hurried over to see what their Lord needed.

"It is the day of Unleavened Bread, and I want to share this special time with you and my friends. Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

"Where shall we prepare for it?" they asked, anxious to do Jesus' bidding.

"Inside the city, you will meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him to the house he will enter. Then tell the owner that the Teacher requires a guest room to celebrate the Passover with his disciples. Make the preparations in the large upper room that he will show you."

By late afternoon the room was ready. The low table in the centre of the simple space was set. A few rays of the dying sun were fading at the windows. The red of the wine glowed softly in the dimness. The flickering light of tall candles glanced off rich, ripe grapes. Cheese was laid out by a stack of unleavened bread. Bowls and chalices awaited the guests who soon reclined around the table, eating and chatting brightly.

Although the mood was festive, many of the disciples had questions about the events of the past week. They were thrilled with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the overwhelming welcome of the people buoyed their hopes for the imminent display of his power to reign. However, much that he had spoken of questioned the nature of his kingdom. They were more anxious and confused when, after the meal, Jesus said that he would not eat or drink again until he drank in God's kingdom.

The sun was going down but the candles still glowed softly in the darkening room. Without ceremony, Jesus stood up, took some bread in his hands, and held it up before his friends. He broke the bread, saying, "This is my body which is broken for you. Take it, and eat, in remembrance of me." The disciples passed the bread around, glancing somberly at each other. When Jesus did the same with the wine, some of them were saddened. They were beginning to sense a deeper meaning behind their beloved Master's words.

It was a simple gesture, one you might expect Jesus to make: to raise bread before his disciples, break it, and offer it to them. It would be much longer before they truly understood the deeper symbolism which has become central to the Christian life.

Bread, a staple of life and one of the oldest prepared foods, dates back to the Neolithic period beginning about 9500 BCE. The earliest bread was probably a cooked version of a grain paste, made from ground cereal grains and water. It may have developed by accidental cooking or deliberate experimentation. Flat breads of the type Jesus used are still a staple in parts of the world like Middle Eastern pita and Ethiopian *injera*. Even where it is not actually a staple food, bread is high on every culture's list, along with similar foods such as noodles or rice.

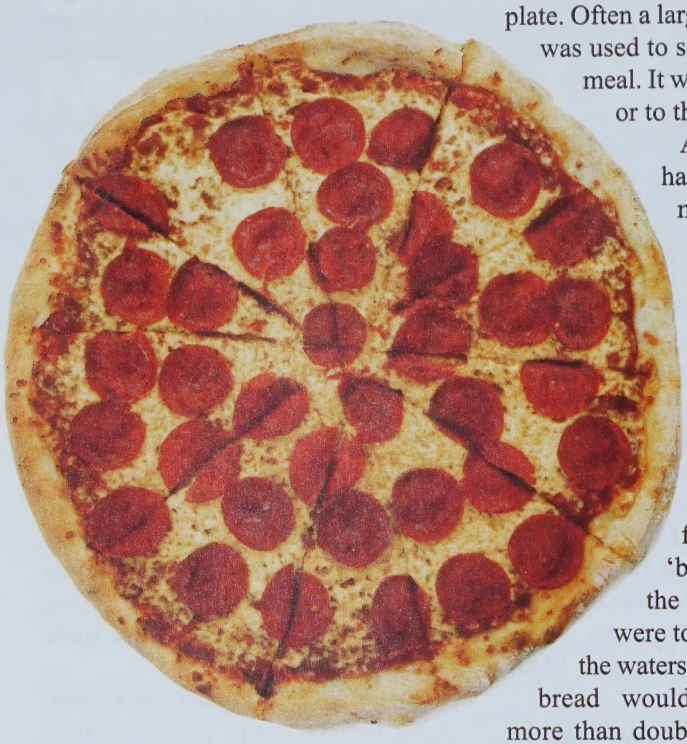
Each country in the world has its own form of bread, varying in greater or lesser degrees from others. The ingredients in bread are simple ones that every culture has in some form: flour, water, oil. God in infinite grace provided the necessities when the world was created. Water flows; fields wave with grains; plants release their oils for our nourishment.

The Passover bread was unleavened to commemorate the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt. When the Israelites fled from Egypt there was no time to add the yeast. They took their bread as it was, and carried in on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing. In memory of that time, the people made their bread without yeast for the seven days of the Passover festival.

Bread is made different ways in different places. Recently in Montreal I saw the huge troughs for dough in the home of Marguerite Bourgeoys who fed Les filles du Roi (The King's Wards) who were sent over to New France between 1663 and 1673 as potential brides for the French settlers. The young women, and all who worked in the large house and farmed the vast property by the St. Lawrence River, needed many loaves each day. These were baked in a vast brick oven and drawn out with a wooden paddle. Bread can be baked in many different ways: in ovens, on hot stone, in clay pots, and in frying pans are the more common methods.

Foods based on bread add considerable delight to our everyday lives, and of course, to our celebrations. Whose mouth wouldn't drool at a warm cinnamon bun in the morning, dripping with butter and brown sugar? What teenager would pass up a piece of steaming pizza, covered with the 'works'? Many people have some form of bread with each meal: croissants, tea biscuits, buns, dumplings, and such. Our love affair with bread begins in childhood and for most lasts a lifetime.

Bread adapts to other foods. As with pizza, bread takes on other flavours and enhances them. The many variations of bread-making include tortillas, baguettes, briôche, biscuits, pretzels, bagels, to name but a few. It is the



humblest food when shared in a field by shepherds guarding their flocks and the most elevated when served at high tea in a royal castle. When I was little I loved to have a piece of bread with butter and brown sugar. And of course there was toast with brown sugar and cinnamon - now that was a treat!

We can use bread to scoop up rich, thick dip, we can hollow out the round loaf to serve that dip, or even to hold a bowl of soup. Eating the bowl becomes the final treat. Bread can be filled before baking with herbs, cheeses, jams – are you getting hungry? In Medieval Europe bread was sometimes served not only as a food but as an absorbent plate. Often a large piece of stale bread was used to soak up remains of the meal. It was then fed to the poor or to the dogs.

A humble loaf of bread has significance beyond mere nutrition. It is central to hospitality. In every place and in every way guests are usually offered bread. So important is it, that the word bread is used as a metaphor for food in general. It also signifies money, as is 'bread' or 'dough'. In the Old Testament people were to cast their bread upon the waters, and trust God that the bread would metaphorically be more than doubled when returned to them. All that we hope for in good faith will be ours if we believe.

Bread is a food that fills our senses and warms our hearts as well as our bellies. This summer we bought a bread-maker at a cottage yard sale. We thought it would be nice to use occasionally, and for $15 it would surely pay for itself after a few tasty loaves. How nice it was when guests arrived, to greet them with the smell of fresh bread swelling in the bread-maker. How wonderful to welcome new neighbours with a just-baked loaf. We soon discovered how easy it was to make - even our granddaughter helped - and how inexpensive. Motivated by

that find, I wondered whatever happened to the bread-maker I had at home. I'm going to find which corner is was consigned to, get it out, clean it up, and put into service once again.

Once made, bread is the most elemental of foods. One can tear it apart with fingers and eat it just as naked as it came from the oven. It can be served warm or cold, toasted, fried, spread with oil or butter, dipped into gravy, topped with various spreads, sweet or savoury, and of course, it is the foundation of the ubiquitous sandwich, from simple peanut butter to an elaborate, stacked 'Dagwood' creation.

The Bible is full of images of bread, but the most endearing and spiritually satisfying is from John 6:35 when Jesus and the disciples meet on the Capernaum side of the Sea of Galilee. It is the day after Jesus fed thousands of people on the mountainside. Jesus has retired to a quiet place, and the disciples set off across Lake Capernaum. A sudden storm arises and their boat is tossed on the high wind. Ghostlike, Jesus appears through the mist, walking on the water. They are terrified until he speaks to them and they recognize his voice.

The crowd eventually follows them and begins to question Jesus. They ask for signs such as when God fed their ancestors in the desert. He says, "I am the bread of life." Then, astonishingly, he continues, "The one who comes to me will never go hungry, and the one who believes in me will never be thirsty." What an amazing announcement for all who are hungry, not for food alone, but for spiritual sustenance. For those who thirst for drugs and alcohol, who skirt the edges of the underworld, the message is clear: here is something to assuage even the worst hunger, the deepest thirst. Here is the gift of life itself. All who eke out a pitiful existence every day while their stomachs heave and ache with hunger, behold a man who knows their pain and brings hope.

Jesus does not literally make bread for those who hunger. In the feeding of the thousands of people on the mountainside he raises the small offering of a young boy before the crowd and distributes it. Perhaps his message so moves them that they slip their hands under their cloaks and surreptitiously add their own small loaves to the others. But they are all filled and what remains overflows the baskets. Jesus is the message. Then he speaks figuratively of the bread he gives to all who ask, the bread that is his life and his reason for being.

At the beginning of his ministry Jesus taught his disciples how to pray. Part of that prayer was to ask for bread sufficient for the day, like the manna in the desert - not what people wanted, but what people needed. When he sends his disciples out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick, he advises them to take nothing for the journey, no staff, no bag, no money, and no bread... How were they to live?

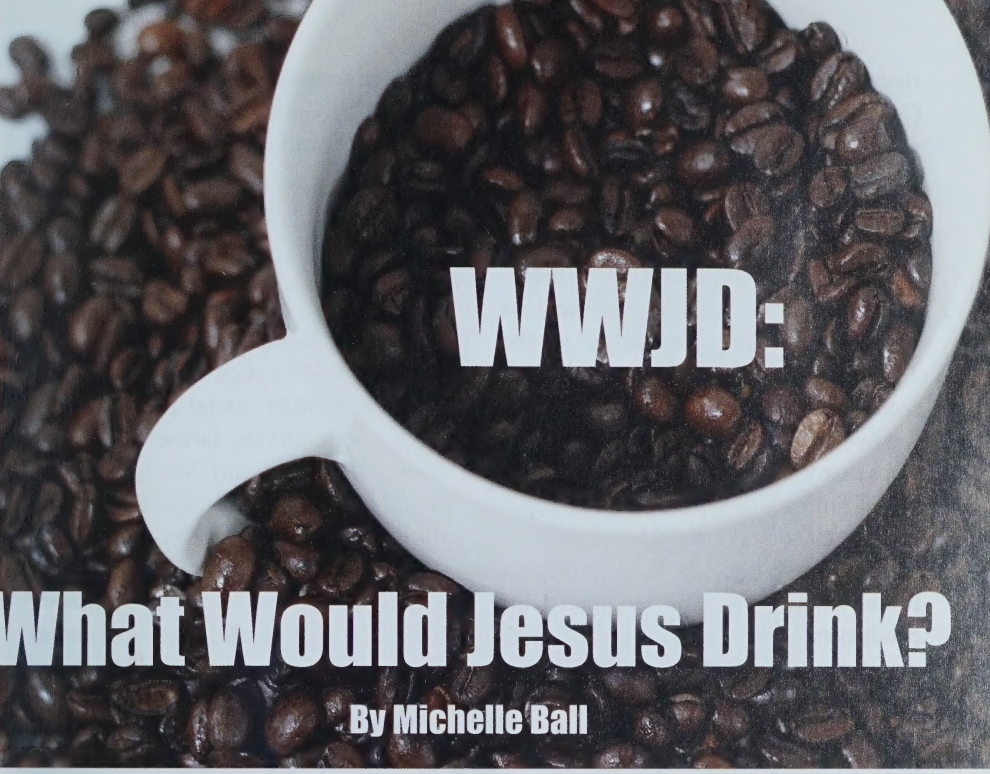
Remember that he said once, people cannot live by bread alone? Jesus had been in the desert for forty days, and he was aching with hunger. The devil suggested he turn some stones to bread for

food. After all, he was said to be the Son of God. Jesus' response was that the word of God was more important than any bread.

Jesus knew that the full significance of bread went far beyond mere crumbs of food. The bread he offers feeds the spirit and soul just as real bread nourishes the body. The tradition Jesus set in motion on the night before his death, continues to this day. We, who believe, experience him in the breaking and sharing of bread as the disciples did on that fateful Passover night and as his companions on the Emmaus road knew him after his death when he broke bread and gave it to them.

May we never be so full of the cares of the world that our eyes fail to recognize the living Lord in the loaf, in the roll, or in the chunk of bread that is broken for us.

L. June Stevenson is the former Editor of Glad Tidings.



WWJD: What Would Jesus Drink?

By Michelle Ball

One of the biggest challenges we face, as people seeking to be disciples of Christ, is how to align our everyday decisions and actions with the message of Christ; a call to love, and to treat others as I would like to be treated. In my own quest to make choices that do not harm my neighbour, the earth, or my brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, I have begun examining the consumer choices I make each day.

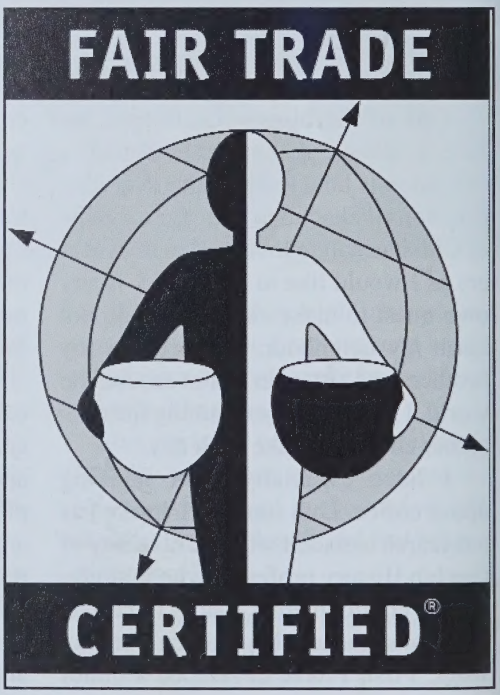
I have especially been thinking about coffee. Last summer I worked as a research assistant with a University of Guelph History professor who is studying the environmental history of coffee. Two consequences have arisen from my work. First, I have developed a minor coffee addiction! More importantly, however, I have gained insight into the complications around the growing and trading of food, and have gained a greater appreciation for such movements as the Fair Trade and Organic movements that are revolutionizing the food choices of people like me.

Have you ever wondered about the origins of the food you are eating? We are a part of a world-wide chain of trade and relationships that involve many players, from the grower/producer of any given product, through those who process it, transport it, market it, and sell it to us, the consumers. For instance, my orange juice was made from Florida oranges, my Rice Krispies came from a

rice paddy in Asia, my banana from Costa Rica, and my coffee is from . . . where? And what are the lives like of our brothers and sisters who grew my coffee in Brazil, or Costa Rica, or the Ivory Coast?

I have wondered, and my wondering has led me to research the Fair Trade movement. Beginning in the 1970's, this movement has revolutionized the way people view and buy coffee worldwide. At that time, people from many different walks of life - people of faith, third-world producers, activists, and others - realized that there were major problems in the international trading system, especially for producers in the Global South*. The worst problems were the very low international price of coffee, the fact that coffee growers were isolated from each other, and fact that the farmers had no involvement with, nor control over, the processing of the beans that they grew. Brokers and other intermediaries controlled the sale of coffee, keeping prices artificially low for producers and even sometimes cheating farmers out of revenue due to them. Forced labour and unsustainable environmental practices, were among the other significant problems with the status quo coffee trading system. Still today, small-scale farmers in the Global South find it very difficult to make a living for their family from the proceeds of a coffee plantation. The Fair Trade movement saw these injustices and sought to re-structure the coffee trading system so that those who grow the product would be treated fairly.

There are many criteria that a coffee cooperative must meet to become "Fair Trade Certified." The workers must receive a fair minimum wage, and investment is required in the community for projects such as schools, hospitals, and other social programs. In these cooperatives, farmers are provided with credit and thus have a stable relationship with their buyers that allow their families to have financial stability. Also, fair trade coffee and especially coffee that is certified 'organic' have to agree to uphold environmental



growing practices that support the sustainability of coffee production. Most importantly, coffee growers are empowered to have more control over their livelihoods and are recognized and respected.

An independent body called "Fair Trade Labelling Organizations International" visits these cooperatives to ensure that the standards are being met. There are over 632 producers worldwide that are certified under this body, and in 2006-2007 the market for Fair Trade grew by 48%! Many faith groups, businesses, and universities are switching to Fair Trade in order to support sustainable livelihoods for marginalized coffee producers in the

Global South. Indeed, it is becoming clearer that the Fair Trade of coffee is, in fact, the real price of coffee. Mainstream coffee prices exploit and underpay coffee farmers.

Here is a quick example, in dollar terms, of the inequality of the mainstream coffee market. When a large chain specialty coffee shop buys a pound of coffee beans from coffee farmers in the Kilimanjaro area, those producers receive less than $1.50. The beverages made from these beans then end up selling for more than $300 (sometimes up to $5 per latte!). There are certainly additional costs incurred by the retailer through the process of selling the coffee, but clearly there are inconsistencies with the way in which coffee is traded and paid for in the traditional market.

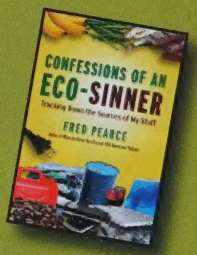
The Fair Trade system may not be perfect, but it is the best system that we have right now. Life is still very hard even for those who attain Fair Trade certification. Those who choose to buy Fair Trade make a statement to the rest of the world that acknowledges the hard work of their sisters and brothers in the Global South. We can support them by paying a price appropriate to the work invested and show through our actions that we do put our money where our mouths are. As we speak the words of scripture about doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God (Micah 6:8), so we act and shop in ways that reflect our beliefs.

Michelle is a student at the University of Guelph studying International Development. She is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Ottawa.

** 'The Global South', 'The Third World' and 'the Developing World', are terms used to refer to the poorer countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. We acknowledge that none of these terms are perfect.*

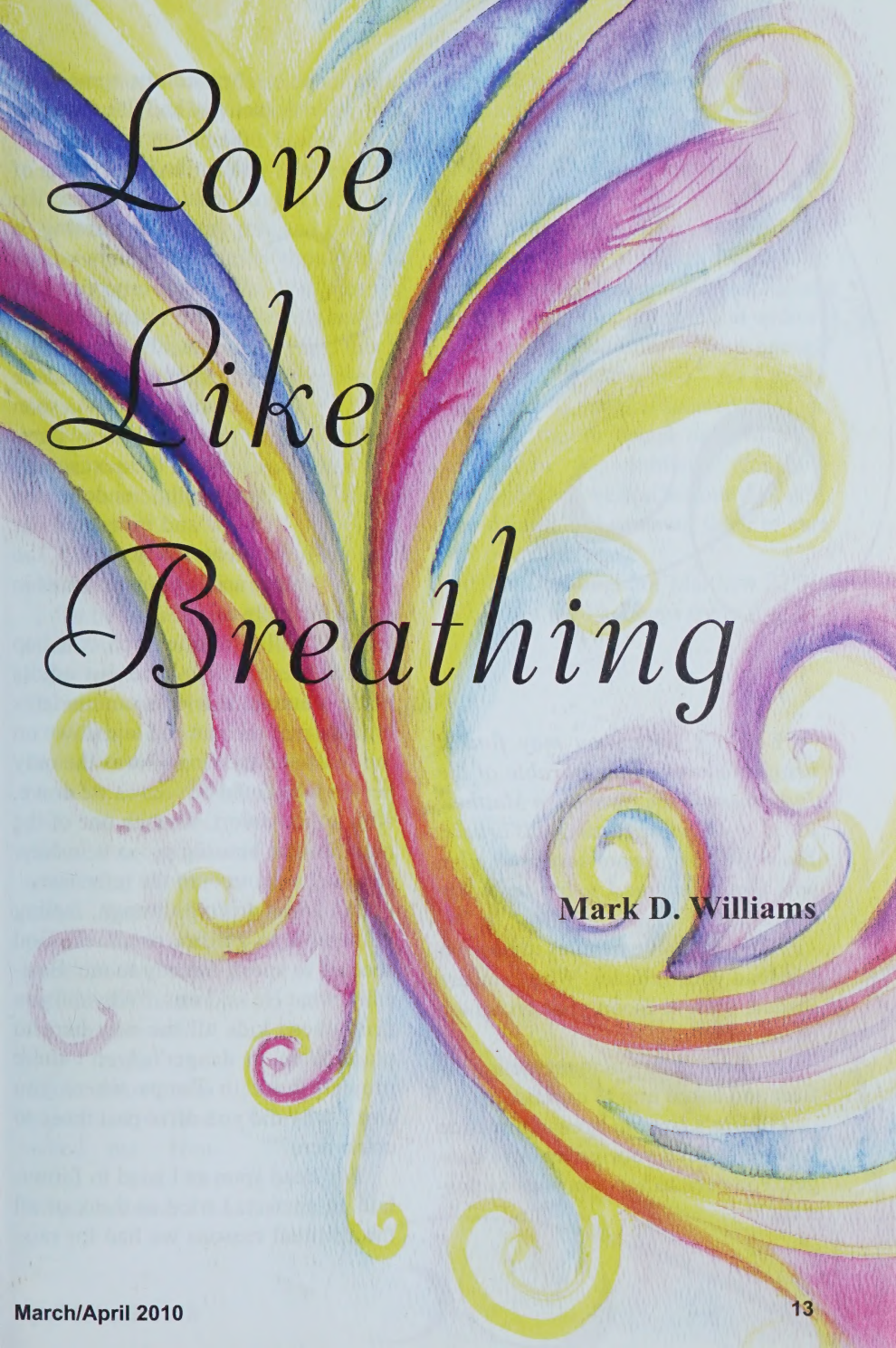
For further study:

50 Reasons to buy Fair Trade Miles Litvinoff and John Madeley. Pluto Press, London, 2007.



Confessions of an eco-sinner: tracking down the sources of my stuff. Pearce, Fred. Beacon Press, 2008.

"www.equalexchange.coop"


Love
Like
Breathing
Mark D. Williams

Apparently, some gang activity had flared up and the police were worried that having a group of rich kids from the suburbs running a puppet show at the inner-city community center might set off a real confrontation of some sort outside. As soon as our group completed the next song, I abruptly ended our show and instructed our students to pack up the stage and puppets and wait in the hallway.

I pulled the church van up against the building, and our adults made a human shield as our students crawled into the van and laid down on the seats and the floor. I was the only person who could be seen as we drove, with police escort, through one of the most violent housing projects in New Orleans, and out onto the interstate.

As I was driving through, feeling vulnerable to gunfire or attack, God seemed to speak directly to me. Basically, what He said was, "Why did you drive these kids all the way here to place them in danger? Aren't there projects back in Tampa where you live…why did you drive past those to come here?"

My head spun as I tried to formulate an answer. I tried to think of all the spiritual reasons we had for rais-

Editor's note: *you may find it helpful to re-read the parable of the Judgement of the Nations in Matthew 25:31 to 45 before reading this article. You might also want to keep your bible with you as you read, to look up other references.*

"You have five minutes to pack up and load your vehicles. When you are loaded, we will escort your group out of the area."

In shock, I turned to the police officer and asked him to explain.

"There's trouble brewing outside and we believe your group is in danger. You need to leave as soon as possible."

ing thousands of dollars, conducting months of training, and driving half way across the United States, but I sensed that God wouldn't believe any of them, so I just tried to tell the truth.

"Because it's my job, and the kids and their families really thought this was an impressive trip. It makes me look good with the parents and the leadership of the church. Plus, this is what good Christians are supposed to do, right?"

Not willing to let it go, God continued to pry, "Do you love these people here enough to give your life for them? I do."

The answer was obvious and painful…"Absolutely not."

To be honest, this trip was just another thing to mark off the checklist of expectations that I worked from as a Christian and a youth pastor.

When we arrived back at the dorms, everyone was exhausted, both physically and emotionally. We planned to go downtown after dinner to meet with some people on the street, so everyone settled in to rest for the afternoon.

I began to think about the question God had asked me. Honestly, I was frustrated because I had worked so hard to develop a strategy that actually inspired the youth to be excited about our church. And yet, somehow, it seemed that we were still missing the point.

As I lay there, my mind wandered to James 1:27, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world." As I meditated on this verse, it seemed that God wanted me to focus on two main things in this ministry: teaching teenagers to love and honour God with their lives, and teaching them to care for people in need.

Then I thought of Matthew 22:36-37, when the Pharisees try to test

Jesus:

"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

This passage seemed to say the same thing. My ministry should be focused on teaching teenagers to love and honour God with their lives, and teaching them to care for people in need. Both passages encouraged me to help build a ministry that would challenge teenagers to love God and to love people. It should have been obvious, right?

Thinking about it, I realized that while our ministry offered opportunities to be involved in both areas, our greatest focus was on loving God. This trip was one of the few opportunities our youth would have all year to actively "look after orphans and widows in their need". The rest of our programs and activities were designed to teach students how to be faithful: to read scripture and to pray, to share faith with friends, to attend church programs and trips, to develop a Christian lifestyle. Was it possible that my ministry was out of balance? Were we overly focused on loving God with too little focus on loving people in need around us?

After we returned home, I continued to struggle with our youth ministry strategy and philosophy. I knew we needed to make some changes, but I wasn't sure where to start. The answer came from a book about social justice I found.

The book pointed me to the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats found in Matthew 25:31-46, where the Son

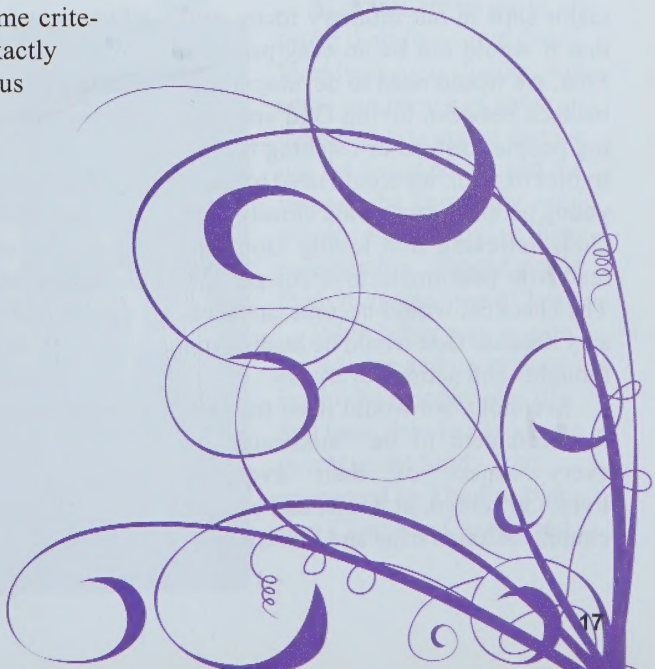
of Man comes in glory, and separates the 'sheep' from the 'goats'. This is a scene of judgment where Jesus separates people based on an incredibly simple checklist: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, providing for the needy, and visiting those in prison - in short, caring for people in need.

It struck me that this list was so different from the list of things our programs tried to teach.

I was shocked by the answer of the righteous sheep on His right. They didn't know that they had fed Jesus when he was hungry, or given him a drink, or visited him. How could they not remember doing all of these things? It seems to me that someone would remember visiting prisons or feeding the hungry or providing for the needy.

The cursed goats on the left were judged by exactly the same criteria. And their answer is exactly the same as the righteous sheep! They didn't know that they had failed to feed Jesus when he was hungry, or give him a drink, or visit him. Even though I had read this passage numerous times, I had never noticed this before. I had always assumed that there was an obvious contrast between those who are saved and those who choose lives of selfish wickedness. Looking closer, it now seemed to be a comparison of the righteous sheep and those who thought they were righteous but were actually cursed even though they didn't know it. The cursed goats thought they were living for God because they worked through the checklist they thought God required. It is only at the end of their time that they realize that they have the wrong list.

The answers to the two groups are the same, but they represent two different perspectives. The goats on the left wanted to know where this list of new responsibilities came from. "Lord, when were these added? If you had told us you specifically wanted us to do this, we would have been right



on it!" This contrasts sharply with the sheep who seemed surprised by all of this. Apparently, they had a heart for loving people all along without even realizing it. Caring for people in need was simply part of their spiritual DNA and came as easily to them as breathing.

The sheep might start each day with the question, "God, what are we going to do today?" By walking in relationship with God closely each day, they were naturally able to love others. And by doing so, they loved the very people for whom God was most concerned. The goats, on the other hand, could wake up each day and ask, "What am I going to do for God today?" Going through their "To Do" list, they find something that is for God, they do it, they check it off, and they move on.

I sensed that we needed to make a major shift in our ministry focus, and that it would not be an easy process. First, we would need to develop a true balance between loving God and loving people. Instead of teaching the activities of faith, we would need to show young people how to walk closely with God, believing that loving God will lead to a passionate love for people. The checklist would become unnecessary because God would be leading our thoughts and actions everyday.

Secondly, we would need to teach the teenagers to be "missional" in every aspect of their everyday lives…at school, at home, and even at church. Mission trips and service projects would still be available, but not as the main avenue to love others. Hopefully, as they learned to love God, loving others would be as easy as breathing.

The week that we returned to Tampa, I walked down the street to the basketball courts near the projects. The courts were all packed with kids playing pick-up basketball, just like they did everyday. I had driven past these kids every day for nearly a year. I walked around and invited them to come to play basketball after church on Wednesday nights. Even though they looked at me like I was crazy and out of place, within six weeks most of them were coming to our air-conditioned gym for a short Bible study and a great game of hoops. Even though I grew up playing basketball in the park, most of our teenagers had never been around kids from the projects. It was an adjustment for everyone.

May we all walk closely in a love relationship with God so that loving others can be as easy as breathing.

Mark Williams is the Family Ministries Pastor at an inter-denominational church near Nashville, Tennessee where he lives with his wife Kelley and their six children. Follow his blog at "http://www.beyondthecomma.com" www.beyondthecomma.com or email him at mwilliams@cchville.org.

Hope Across the Border?

By Joan Greer

Have you ever tried to have a conversation about migrants or refugees arriving on our doorstep? It has happened to me; once before I left for Mexico and a second time after I returned. It is a very provocative topic; in these conversations, I was offended by the racist rhetoric I heard. Taking a stand in favour of migrant workers requires having concrete information at your finger-tips. Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson has introduced this topic by saying:

You've probably heard people say on TV, "What is it about 'illegal' that you don't understand?" "Those people are criminals--felons!", or "They're taking our jobs." But the reality is so much more complex. Migration is a problem that calls for international solutions. It is an issue that affects many countries in the world because of war, torture, weather, refugees, and economics.

Migrants are trying to improve their lives, live their lives with some dignity, with some semblance of value and meaning. It is unjust that we use the sweat equity and the taxes of the immigrant community without giving them membership, without giving them the protection of laws.[1]

What better way to gain knowledge and understanding of the complexities of this issue than to participate in a Migrant Study Tour sponsored by The Presbyterian Church in Canada and

led by Stephen Allen, Associate Secretary for Justice Ministries? I am so proud of my church leaders for being committed to such an important issue as human rights for migrants. Along with three other Presbyterian colleagues and a Unitarian Church group from Washington DC, we visited many points of interest and met with organizations and individuals concerned about migrants along the Mexico/US border.

Men, women, and occasionally even children, cross the border clandestinely from Mexico into the US hoping to escape the poverty, hunger, and even starvation they struggle against every day. There are few jobs in their communities. There are many unemployed and underemployed people in the cities. Peasant farmers who can no longer support their families are leaving their land and are joining the unemployed in the cities.

The vast majority of undocumented migrants entering the US are Mexican, but this human exodus includes people from El Salvador, Guatemala, and other counties in Central and Latin America. They are typically led through the desert by guides known as 'coyotes'. Migrants take huge risks making this journey, including entrusting their very lives to these guides. Stories of unscrupulous coyotes extorting more money from migrants, abandoning those who have become ill, or telling migrants that they have arrived in the US when in fact they are still in Mexico, are all too common.

Cacti, snakes, scorpions, and a

rugged terrain make the crossing a risky venture. If their feet give way to blisters, cuts and bruises, or if they become dehydrated or ill, they may be left behind. Unless they can get to a highway, they may die. In one twelve month period in 2004/05, almost 300 migrants died attempting to enter the US through Arizona. Almost every day there are very ill migrants or bodies that are picked up. Since the implementation of the current border policies began in the early 1990's, it is estimated that 4,000 migrants have died.

We met with organizations in the states of Sonora (Mexico) and Arizona (US) that try to assist migrants. Grupos Beta is a Mexican government organization that advises and assists migrants. Staff from Grupos Beta will go into the Mexican desert looking for stranded migrants. They will also assist migrants who have been deported back to Mexico by helping them return to their communities. The Arizona-based organization 'No More Deaths' has a faithful group of trained volunteers who go into the desert regularly to leave food and water on the trails that migrants use. If they find a migrant in need of medical assistance, or if they find a body, they alert officials with the US Border Patrol. Tragically, water bottles left by these volunteers are sometimes pierced by angry vigilantes.

Why are so many people leaving Mexico? One reason is the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that came into effect in 1994. NAFTA was supposed to improve the standard of living for Mexicans. Some of the wealthier Mexicans have benefitted from this agreement, but the benefits have by-passed the poorer citizens. Under NAFTA, Mexican tariffs on agricultural products like corn and beans have been removed. Consequently, corn and beans grown in the US, where government subsidies keep the prices low, flood the Mexican market. Mexican farmers can't compete with these subsidized crops, and so they are leaving the rural areas.

We stayed overnight at a centre for migrants run by the Catholic Church in Agua Prieta, Mexico, which is on the border with Douglas, Arizona. There are a number of these

centres for migrants in Mexico run by local dioceses. Migrants have a safe place to stay if they are on the journey to the US or if they have been deported and are on their way home. The centres provide showers, counselling, and access to a phone to contact their families. Most importantly, these centres treat migrants with dignity.

We shared an evening meal with migrants. Each one of them had stories to tell of dangerous border crossings, and many of them failed to complete the journey. The centre in Agua Prieta is blessed with a large number of volunteers, young and old, who are always on call to provide nutritious meals and other services to migrants. In 2009, more than 2,500 people used the services provided by the centre.

We also met the Reverend Mark Adams, a minister of the Presbyterian Church USA and a director of Frontera de Cristo. This centre is jointly supported by The National Presbyterian Church in Mexico and the Presbyterian Church USA. Frontera de Cristo has a large contingent of volunteers who provide a variety of services to migrants, with support from local Agua Prieta businesses. Once a year a large food drive is held, with as much as 22 tons of food items donated. Mark tries to maintain a working relationship with the US Border Patrol, but he also advocates on behalf of migrants to ensure that their human rights are not violated. He spoke with us about a report he was involved in preparing that included over 75 recommendations regarding ways to deal more humanely with migrants. What we observed about Mark was his ability to cooperate with many organizations that work from different (often opposing) perspectives to find ways to ensure that the migrants' rights are protected.

We visited Nogales, Sonora, a twin city to Nogales, Arizona. A massive wall runs between the two cities. Our visit to the wall was an ominous experience. In some places along the wall we noted tunnels burrowed underneath. The wall extends for 80 miles in Arizona. It is made from metal bundles of run-way strips that were brought back from the Vietnam War and the first Gulf War. At the wall in Nogales, we met with Diego

Taddei and Guadalupe Serrano, two Mexican artists whose brilliantly colourful art hangs on the wall, symbolically depicting the suffering and tragedies of the Mexican migrants. We were pleased to have the chance to meet the Reverend John Fife, Pastor Emeritus at Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson, Arizona when we visited that congregation's ministry to migrants. Rev. Fife has been involved in border issues for more than 20 years, giving sanctuary to the refugees coming into the US, who were fleeing the brutal conflict and repression in El Salvador and Guatemala in the 1980's. He was committed to this work even though it resulted in his being imprisoned for his ministry in the sanctuary movement. More recently, he has assisted migrants from Mexico who sought to enter the US after NAFTA came into effect. In 1997, Rev. Fife received the E H Johnson award for "service on the cutting edge of mission" from The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

We spent an afternoon in the Federal District Court of Tucson observing "Operation Streamline". In the one court session we saw, 70 migrants, mostly from Mexico, but including a few from El Salvador and Guatemala, were charged with entering the US without proper documentation. This is not a criminal offence, but an administrative one. Federal District Courts in other communities and states along the border are part of Operation Streamline. There are so many undocumented migrants that the court system cannot deal with them on an individual basis. Once the proceedings ended, the 70 men and women were led out of the courtroom in handcuffs and leg shackles. The conditions in detention do not always meet American and international laws and conventions. Some of the organizations we met with work hard to ensure that US law and policies are respected and adhered to.

Also in Tucson, we met with Yendi Castillo, a public defender who explained that there is an average of one thousand arrests per day of undocumented migrants in the Tucson area. The cost of running the judicial system to deal with undocumented migrants is exorbitant – over ten million dollars each month. In addition, there are the costs of running the de-

tention centres and the Border Service. All of this adds up to hundreds of millions of dollars. Think what this money could do for infrastructure and assisting the poor. How can this be justified? Where is the Good Samaritan in all of this?

Let me close with a reflection from Dr. Kelly Denton-Borhaug, a faculty member of the Moravian College Department of Religion in Pennsylvania. She has compared the current treatment of migrants to the historic treatment of native peoples in the first 40 years of European presence in North America. At that time (500 years ago) over 12 million people died due to the hardships forced upon them in colonized areas. "In our own supposed "post colonial" era it seems as though so much victimization continues, aided and abetted by Mexico and the US alike"[2]

Every Thursday evening, a group of Christians in Tucson gathers for a candlelight vigil in a tiny park dedicated to the memory of the victims of the desert. We attended the service, and at the end, we joined hands singing "Peace is flowing like a river, flowing out of you and me, flowing out into the desert setting all our captives free. Hope is flowing . . ." May knowledge and wisdom guide those who work in this area, so that peace, hope, and joy will spread through our society.

Joan Greer is a member of McNab Street Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, ON. She was a participant in the Migrant Study Tour that took place in Nov, 2009.

---

[1]Presentation at conference Crisis at our Borders: The Human Reality behind the Immigration Debate. Oct 29, 2009

[2]Quoted in The Comenian, Student Newspaper of Moravian College, March 19/09

Over $1.5 million raised through PWS&D Appeal

In September 2009, donations to PWS&D were down significantly, so an urgent appeal was issued with an ambitious fundraising target of $1.5 million. The results are in, and Presbyterians across the country demonstrated unprecedented support, helping us exceed our goal by raising $1,509,404 for programs around the world!

Presbyterian World Service & Development
The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Thank you for supporting PWS&D and for choosing to respond to the needs of others. Together we are creating new futures of hope and opportunity.

1-800-619-7301 ext. 291 • www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd • 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7

Mary Knew

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Christ is risen!
People: He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!
Leader: Through the Word of God, and through our worship of God, we have come to know Jesus.
People: As we listen to the word, as we worship the Lord, we hope to meet Jesus once again.

HYMN 260
Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord

PRAYER
God of all seasons, draw us close to you in this Easter time. As we gather here for worship, we remember other Easter seasons, other experiences of your resurrection. Once again we come together to find what it means to be an Easter people. **AMEN**

HYMN 250
I danced in the morning

THE STORY
NARRATOR: At the end of a calendar year we often take time to remember the events of months gone by. At the end of a life, we often review that person's life. As we think about the end of Jesus' life on earth, let's consider Jesus through the eyes and words of his mother Mary.

MARY: I remember the day that I first learned that I was going to give birth. I couldn't believe how blessed I was. That angel spoke to me, a poor girl, from a plain, ordinary family. I learned that I was the one chosen to bear God's son. I felt like I was part of a great mystery. I knew, and yet there was more than just knowing. I remember thinking about all the countless blessings that had happened to our people since that first covenant with Abraham many years ago. It seemed that I could stand back from history, and the present, and see them come together. There was awareness, understanding, that was different from anything I had experienced before. I wondered if my intended husband would understand as I did.

READER: Luke 1:47, 48, 54, 55

NARRATOR: The next time we meet Mary, she and her intended, Joseph, have travelled to Bethlehem to register

for the census. The baby's time is near. We can imagine that it is a difficult time for her, her body big and awkward, arriving in the town with thousands of other people and animals, finding no place to lodge for the night. Yet we hear no complaints. Mary understands her plight, her role, in a way that no one else does.

MARY: After a difficult day, we are given space to stay in a building behind a local inn. It's not a very comfortable place, but at least we have some shelter and a place to rest. Suddenly, I find that I am in labour. It is my first time, a difficult time, but once the baby is born, I feel totally different. How can I explain this? I just know that this is not an ordinary birth. I know and yet there is more than just knowing. He is mine, but he belongs to the world.

READER: Luke 2:15-19

NARRATOR: We know the story of the shepherds and the Wise Men, and of King Herod being threatened by a 'baby king.' We know that Mary and Joseph escaped to Egypt. The next time we hear about them, Jesus is 12 years old and the family travels to worship at the Temple. Mary and Joseph leave without him.

MARY: I remember that time in his life. He was such a curious child. He asked so many questions about our faith! I knew that he would be a great teacher. There was always something different about his studying. He was so intense, so engaged. He liked to listen to Joseph tell the stories of our faith. His quest for learning seemed insatiable. I knew from the beginning that this child of God's was special. I knew, and yet there was more than just knowing. I knew, and I thought I understood, but later, I had to realize that there was even more to him than I had known or guessed.

NARRATOR: The next time we see Mary interact with Jesus was at a wedding in Cana.

READER: John 2:1-7

MARY: I remember that day so clearly! When they ran out of wine, I knew that Jesus could help them. He seemed to question why I would ask him to help. But I knew. Sometimes a mother just knows. It was that same sense of knowing that I had from before he was born. So I asked him to help. And he did. It wasn't just about helping the host. It was more than providing wine. It was about filling all of us with his love.

NARRATOR: We only meet Mary one more time before the crucifixion. She has come with her other sons to hear Jesus preaching to a large group of people. They ask to speak to him. His answer: "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?" (Matthew 2:46-48)

MARY: That day was painful. Yet, I understood. Jesus had welcomed everyone into his family. His family was greater than my little family. He welcomed everyone: he belonged to everyone. He may not see me as his mother, but he would always be my son and I would love him forever.

NARRATOR: And then we come to the story of the arrest, the trial and the crucifixion. Where was Mary in all this? Jesus did not call out for his mother, only his heavenly Father. But Jesus was still her son.

MARY: I will never forget the last days that my Son was on this earth. The ones who were trying to get rid of him finally arrested him, brought him to trial and convicted him. It was so painful. I knew his time on earth was special. He had said many times that his hour would come. I understood, and yet it was hard to watch. I was there every minute. I was there with the group of women. I was there when Joseph of Arimathea asked to take the body. I was with the younger women. We went home and prepared spices and ointments for our return. The next day was the Sabbath so we rested according to our commandments.

READER: Luke 24: 1-12

MARY: Amazed! Why should Peter be amazed? The signs were there. I knew that it could happen. With all my heart and with all my soul, and with all my strength, I believed in Him. It takes everything we have to truly believe in His power and his resurrection. We can read about it, sing about it, talk about it, but we can only understand it when we put everything we are into believing. I cannot tell you how to do that. But I can tell you that when we walk the road of faith, we understand. When we love as he loved, when we let ourselves be loved as He wants to love us, then we can know, as he knew, that the power of God to do more than we can even imagine, is at work within us, and within our world.

READER: Luke 24:13-35

MARY: I heard all this after it happened. It seemed that everyone had difficulty in understanding. They needed proof that he did come back to us. Although he told us many times about his hour coming, most people did not really understand. And then when it all unfolded, they needed proof. But I didn't. I knew that it would unfold in God's time, just like faith unfolds in our own lives. I just knew. God's Spirit guided me throughout that time of my life and for the rest of my days. I pray that you may also know Jesus as I did. I pray that you may walk with him for the rest of your life.

PRAYER

God of the cross, God of the resurrection, we come before you now, giving

thanks to you for your resurrection power. We pray that your presence with us today will help us to understand you in a new way. Teach us to understand our experiences. Teach us to let the power and the mystery of Easter settle in our hearts and refresh our souls, for we pray in the name of our Risen Lord, Jesus the Christ. AMEN

HYMN 262
Come to us, beloved stranger

BLESSING (Unison)
Giving thanks to the Risen Lord,
Holding fast to hope,
Pledging ourselves to faithful service,
Let us take resurrection power into our hearts, and out to God's world.

The Rev. Margaret Robertson serves the Elmvale/Flos charge of the Presbytery of Barrie. She is the former Program Secretary of the WMS.

Freedom

By Marion MacInnis

It was a hot July day when a young woman who called herself Madame Lang visited my village just east of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She was going door to door, offering jobs to the younger women, and exclaiming the great benefits that would come to our families if we went back with her to Phnom Penh. My village was poor and the thought of an income was always in our dreams. When Madame Lang arrived at my home that day, she told me and my mother that I could work at the local flower shop with my best friend Tau. This idea seemed quite marvelous. Pleased to be able to help my family, it didn't take much to decide that I would make the short journey back to Phnom Penh with Madame Lang and Tau.

When our bus arrived at the station, there was a man who looked to be in his mid forties waiting for us. He waved towards Madame Lang, signaling her to come over. They exchanged a few words and she explained to us that this man would take us to where we were going to live for the next few months. Another man, this one younger, pulled up in a black van and told us to get in. We drove for what seemed like hours. Night had fallen and everyone was beginning to get tired. Suddenly we turned onto a road full of potholes. The van turned down a steep, bumpy hill. When we came to the bottom, we jolted to a stop. The older man opened the door and told us to get out. At first we saw tiny shacks, but they were actually run down garages that lined a back alley. Girls in tight clothes, wearing bright red lipstick, filled the rooms. One of the older girls sashayed over to the van. I looked at Tau with horror in my eyes and reality suddenly hit me in the face. Suddenly I knew that we were not going to be working at a flower shop. We had been sold to a brothel owner. I would probably never see my parents again.

The older girl, whose name was Yau, motioned for us to follow her. Tau still stood in shock unable to move. The younger man who had driven the van raised a metal rod and struck her violently across the face. Her cry was full of shock and anguish. I took her hand and guided her to where Yau was taking us. She led us down a small, dark, staircase where the smell of sweat filled the air. At the bottom, we came to a small locked room. She pushed us all inside and locked the door. Four

stained mattresses stood in front of us. There was a small bucket by the door. The walls were yellow though it looked like they had once been white.

Tau sat on the floor cradling her face in her hands and letting out small sobs. We spoke of our village and the memories that we shared. Suddenly the door swung open and a big man with a gun came in. He threw a bag of clothes on the floor and ordered us to put them on. Soon after, four older girls came in and started to do our hair and make-up. The man spoke harshly. He told us that

we would work only for him now and if there was any misbehavior, we would be punished.

That was the day I lost my soul. I had a body that was made to endure horrible things, but I was no longer a person. Days and months passed as we all waited and wondered whether rescue was possible. Each day I woke to the thought, "Will this be the day someone saves me from this hell?"

One day a man in his mid-thirties visited the brothel. He bought Tau and me for 15 days. I knew about arrangements like this. The things you must endure during this time are usually worse than when you stay at the brothel. The man led us to his car; it looked very expensive and foreign. Tau and I got into the back seat. The man spoke to us in broken English, but never once did he try to touch us. We drove through the rest of the day and long into the night. It was the next day when we finally got to our destination.

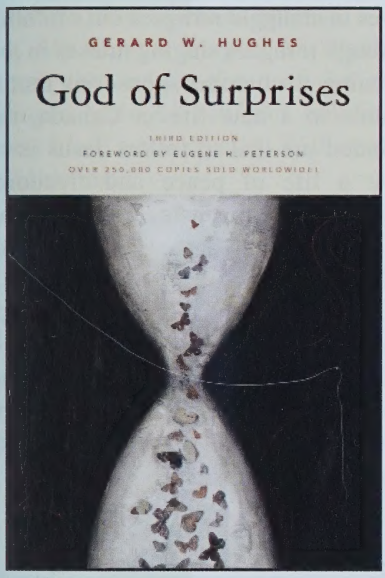
The man drove through a rusty gate and onto some kind of compound. A young woman came through the front door of the building greeting us with a big smile. This was a strange experience for us, it had never happened before. The man got out of the front seat and walked towards us. He opened our door and took us both by the hand. He led us in through the front door of the building and then out through the back entrance into a small yard. The open space was filled with children, some as young as five, playing, singing and dancing. All of them had smiles on their faces. The lady bent down on one knee facing us and she spoke the words that I had been waiting so long to hear: "You're free now."

Marion MacInnis is a 17 year old student. She wrote this story for her high school writing course, after researching the topic of human trafficking. The story is fictional, but it describes a stark reality. She chose to set the story in Cambodia, but it could have been set almost anywhere in the world. Even in Canada, 'recruiters' for the sex trade frequently stake out bus and train stations looking for young women who are on their own and offering to 'help' them find a place to stay in an unfamiliar city. Within the community of people concerned about human trafficking, there is concern that young people orphaned by the recent earthquake in Haiti will be preyed upon as well.

On the positive side, there are organizations, like the one described in the story, that are working to rescue people enslaved in the sex trade, and to prevent others from falling victim to 'recruiters'.

Book Reviews

God of Surprises
by Gerard W. Hughes



The publisher of *God of Surprises* has recently released the 25th anniversary edition of the book. Written by a Jesuit Roman Catholic priest, the book has been translated into 12 languages. The title of the book refers to the unexpected ways in which God interacts with those who engage in the search for the inner treasures that God has given to each of us.

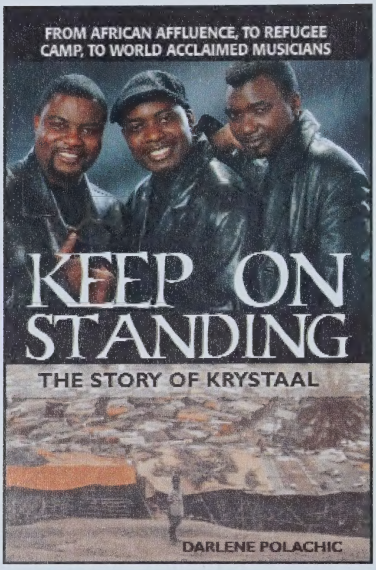
Hughes believes that our understanding of our world, which in turn affects our actions and reactions to it, lies in how we order our inner life. He maintains that if we choose to ignore our inner life it has a tendency to manifest itself in some form of violence. His sole purpose in writing the book is to suggest ways in which we can get in touch with our inner self or, as he puts it, find the hidden treasure within ourselves. He draws on the parable in which Jesus says the kingdom of God is like a treasure hidden in a field which someone finds, only to hide it again, then happily sells everything and returns to purchase the field Matt 13:44. Hughes sees us as the field in which the hidden treasure lies, waiting to be discovered.

The book details a process of discovery through which the reader explores how to recognize and relate to the divinity within. Exercises and meditations intended to plunge through our various levels of consciousness are described. During the journey of seeking awareness of the divine operating in our lives, Hughes warns we can expect some levels of uncertainty, pain and confusion. We need not fear: this is only the prodding of God. Hughes has drawn heavily on his Jesuit training and experience of the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola who founded the Jesuit Order.

This book could easily be studied by individuals or used as the basis for a group study of spirituality.

Reviewed by Janice Barnes

Keep on Standing: The Story of Krystaal
by Darlene Polachic


FROM AFRICAN AFFLUENCE, TO REFUGEE CAMP, TO WORLD ACCLAIMED MUSICIANS
KEEP ON STANDING
THE STORY OF KRYSTAAL
DARLENE POLACHIC

Written in an informal, conversational style, this book tells the life story of three brothers who are now known as the musical group Krystaal. Their saga begins in a privileged home in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). Because two of the brothers participated in the protests against the 1989 student massacre in Lubumbashi, their family was in serious danger. Those family members who were not murdered escaped to neighbouring countries. In the bleak context of refugee camps, the brothers came to faith in Jesus. As their faith developed, they began to express it through music. They were able to immigrate to Saskatchewan, and in time, they were able to sponsor other family members to join them. Eventually they chose Toronto as the headquarters for their full-time music ministry.

The people in this book, from Catholic nuns and priests risking their lives to smuggle refugees out of Zaire, through refugees singing praises in the evening, to churches sponsoring immigrants to a new life in Canada, reminded me that to follow Jesus is to live a life of peace and freedom. Through their music, Krystaal has shared this message of peace around the world.

Fans of the music group Krystaal will, of course, enjoy this book, but it will also be of interest to those who want to learn more about the lives of refugees and about helping immigrants settle in a new country.

Reviewed by: Judith Farris

My name is Sangoel
Written by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed
Illustrated by Catherine Stock

"The old man hugged him, and Sangoel could feel the bones in his thin arms. 'Remember, you will always be Dinka. You will be Sangoel. Even in America.'"

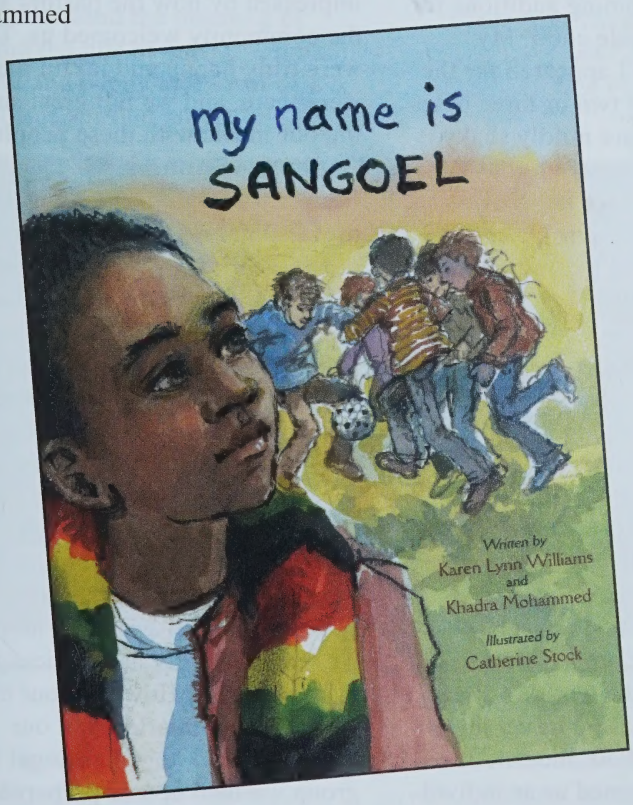
Sangoel, his mother and sister are refugees from Sudan. They have just left behind everything familiar and are beginning a new life in America. Things are different in America. It is

big and open and there is no barbed-wire to keep them in. They don't need to worry about threats coming in the middle of the night. But it is also confusing and at times overwhelming. There is a lot to learn and Sangoel is trying to find where he belongs.

My name is Sangoel is a touching story that relates some of the challenges faced by refugees building a new life in a new country. Williams and Mohammed help the reader understand the importance of remembering identity and roots, even as people strive to adjust to a new life.

This story is a wonderful read, filled with warmth and humour. It would be an excellent supplement to this year's Learning/Sharing program on refugees.

Reviewed by
Laura Duggan



THE Book Room
WMS PCC
The Book Room
50 Wynford Drive,
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
416-441-1111 800-619-7301
bookroom@presbyterian.ca

Mission in Action

Rad Andras-Laszlo
Protestant Theological Institue
Cluj, Romania

It all started on a warm afternoon in October, when we saw a notice about upcoming auditions for the theological male choir. My friend Balint and I appeared for the try-outs. The first two or three notes we had to sing were mildly shaky, but we got the hang of it pretty quickly. Little did we know at that time, that besides intensive rehearsals, we would be embarking on some amazing weekend excursions.

Some of the smaller communities are not able to host the whole choir, but still wished to share in the ministry of music. It was arranged that octettes (smaller groups of singers) would go to visit some of these villages. These were wonderful opportunities to see something of the lives of small communities that are so isolated from the rest of the world. Although it is always a pleasure travelling with the whole choir, the octette excursions strengthened us as individuals and developed strong bonds among us.

I had the pleasure of taking part in an excursion to Bita and Kommando, two small towns in Covasna County, where people rarely have the chance to see cultural presentations. We were able to take the gift of music to people who hadn't heard praise and worship in four parts in a very long time. We were impressed by how the pastors and the community welcomed us. They were truly happy and joyful that we were there, and we felt great sharing our music with these people. Our choir may receive feedback from music critics who offer their professional review to help us improve. While their opinion is helpful, it really doesn't have the same impact on us as the sincere words of thanks from an elderly woman in an almost forgotten part of the world. The few words and congratulations, often expressed through a few tears of joy, give us power and will to carry on during our very busy weekly schedules. Sometimes we are tired after driving for hours on end and early on a Sunday morning we feel we hardly have voices to even say hello. However, our experience, our memories, and our leader all work together to get the group warmed up and prepared, both technically and spiritually, for the task at hand.

In my opinion the work we are able to do with the support of our

kindhearted patrons can't be expressed in a report or a letter. In order to understand the work we manage to do under the leadership of our conductor, one would have to see how and where our audience lives, under what circumstances they manage to take some time to come and listen to us. One would have to feel the atmosphere in a broken-down cultural "palace" to truly understand the meaning of "sharing the gift of music". I am grateful and happy that I can be a part of this spirited group, and I hope we will have many more opportunities to bring light to places where the darkness of monotony and human loss of perspective has injured the spirits of the people. May God bless us all in continuing this ministry.

With deepest feelings of gratitude,

Rad Andras-Laszlo
Rad is a first-year student at the Protestant Theological Institute, and sings in the choir led by Brian Johnston.

Overseas Staff Birthdays

April

11 – Sean David Allison, Cameroon
17 – (Peter) Daniel Pandy-Szekeres, Hungary
22 – Linda Inglis, Malawi
24 – Sidney Chang, Taiwan

May

26 – Pauline Brown

A Resident, Armagh
Peel Region, ON

I knew there was something wrong with my marriage long before I had the courage to leave. It seemed I had two equally unappealing options: try to make the marriage work and duck the punches, or leave everything behind and run. I ran, eventually, but only because I feared for my life.

The shelter system offers a limited stay, if you are lucky enough to find a bed when you pluck up your courage to finally leave the abuse. It is a chance to begin again. It is a chance to remove oneself from the immediate danger and apply for welfare. But in too many ways, the system reinforces the idea of punishment that many of us first grew accustomed to in our relationship with an abuser.

Those of us who enter this system, or process, speak of adequate housing, job opportunities and subsidized daycare. We avoid talking about the losses that hurt too much to acknowledge. We close the door on one life and tell ourselves the next door will be a better choice.

On the outside we set and goals and expectations. We measure the steps we take toward meeting those goals. But the inside work we do is very different. It is not easy. It isn't even understood by most people who haven't lived through a similar experience.

Armagh is the only second-stage housing in the Region of Peel. It houses eight families trying desperately to make a better beginning. For those of us who

call Armagh home, we know we are able to stay for a year. That is the real beauty of Armagh: one can stay for a reasonable amount of time. One can try to remember what making a choice feels like, and get used to that feeling again. We have the chance to feel empowered and strengthened, so that we can begin to move toward our hopes and dreams, instead of the all too familiar feelings of being frightened and threatened. When we are scared, all we can do is try run away from our fears.

Armagh is a process. It is a chance to take a breath between the fear and the desire to live fully. For me, Armagh gives me assurance that I am not struggling alone. I share similar stories with my housemates. Our personal experience is that some of our losses are too painful for words, but here we know that our neighbours do have some understanding of what those losses feel like. Here, the road we travel seems less lonely; our journey becomes less isolating. We have time to strengthen ourselves and to mend our broken spirits. Most importantly, Armagh helps us learn how to change our thoughts of 'running away' into thoughts of 'working towards'.

Armagh is supported by annual grants from Canada Ministries of the PCC, and by donations made by individual WMS groups.

Hungary: The Pandy-Szekeres family shared their Christmas dinner with the Rev. C.C. Mambo, a Presbyterian minister from the northern region of Malawi. Rev. Mambo is on study leave at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Sarospatak, Hungary for one year.

In the Society

Twice each year, Waterloo-Wellington Presbyterial members package knitted goods to be sent to partners in India and Malawi. Helen Cleghorn and Margaret Lewis were just two of the many volunteers (including friends from Brampton Presbyterial) who were involved in the assembly line that processed over 90 parcels.

Lanark-Renfrew Presbyterial 96th Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting for 2009 of the Presbytery of Lanark-Renfrew took place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Arnprior on January 30, 2010. The meeting opened with a lively hymn sing led by Eunice Schrader. President Lottie Sutherland welcomed everyone and led the WMS purpose and the constitutional prayer. Devotions based on the theme "Moving Forward", from Philippians 4:12-14, were led by Vivian Young. The history of the Lanark-Renfrew WMS was given by Marion Neill. The 'In Memoriam' service was performed by Betty Hardie and Margaret Sams of Almonte. Christina Ball, Regional Staff, led Bible Study based on the

book by Glen MacDonald 'The Disciple Making Church.' The Seasons of Prayer were read by the secretary, Judy Postma, who also said Grace. A pot-luck lunch was shared and anniversary cake was served for dessert.

There was a 'Bring and Buy' table which raised $150 to be sent to PWS&D for Haiti relief.

The afternoon began with singing, followed by the offering. Wilma Welsh, past moderator of the Presbyterian Church, who spent six years serving the church in Taiwan, was the guest speaker. She outlined the history of mission in the church from the inner-city missions in Montreal in1864 up to the present day. Her message was 'Keep Moving On. Don't get discouraged. Let's keep mission alive in our church.' The business part of the meeting continued. Delegates were chosen to attend the Synodical meeting in Kemptville and the Council gathering in Crieff. The president, Lottie Sutherland, closed the meeting with a reading and a prayer.

Maitland Presbyterial Annual Meeting

"Amazing Grace" was the theme for the annual meeting held January 25 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Wingham. President Joanne Lennips opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Rev. Bernie Skelding, Minister of St. Andrew's and Moderator of the Presbytery, brought greetings from the congregation and the Presbytery. The South Kinloss WMS led worship based on Romans 5: 15-21. Secretary Norma Raynard read the minutes from the last meeting. Reports were read from the treasurer and all the various secretaries. It was announced that the Synodical meeting will be held April 20-21, 2010 in Hamilton. The ladies from Wingham Goforth led a beautiful memorial service remembering members who have passed on in 2009. Mary Robinson, literature secretary, gave a book review on several inspirational books.

A delicious lunch was served by the ladies auxiliary of St. Andrew's Church, Wingham. The afternoon session began with a lively sing song led by Catherine MacDonald and accompanied by Lorraine Clugston.

Our guest speaker was Rev. Linda Pasmore from Molesworth. She gave a wonderful description of the life of John Newton, the self-proclaimed wretch who once was lost, but then was found. He wrote the beautiful hymn, Amazing Grace, as well as countless other well known hymns. Upon his conversion he dedicated his life to God.

An invitation was extended from the Ripley WMS to hold the Spring Rally at their church, May 17. Rev. Dr. Karen MacRae installed the officers for 2010 and shared communion with the group.

The WMS of Alberton, ON celebrated its 100th Anniversary on Oct 2, 2009 with a presentation that included costumes representing each decade from 1909 to the present. Jessie Knox, President of the WMS Synodical for South Western Ontario, was guest speaker.

Mary Shelley (centre) is shown with her mother Eva Hamilton and Rev. Janice Hamalainen of St. Andrew's, Kitchener. At the November WMS meeting, Mary reported on the experiences she and her husband Martin had when they volunteered at a dental clinic in Nicaragua. Martin is a dentist and Mary is a nurse. They hope to return to provide more help later this year.

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS
2009-2010

PRESIDENT
Druse Bryan
68 – 13th Street
Roxboro, QC H8Y 1L7

VICE PRESIDENT
Joan Smith
62 Francis Street
Port Hope, ON L1A 1K4

SECRETARY
Susan McLennan
538 Ingersoll Avenue
Woodstock, ON N4S 4Y2

TREASURER
Janet Brewer
30 Thornhill Avenue
Toronto, ON M6S 4C5

MEMBERS WITHOUT PORTFOLIO
Lenora Arbuckle,
Box 3, 15 Queen Street,
Alma, Ontario N0B 1A0

Carole Bilyk
772 Clifton Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 2X8

Catherine Blatch
PO Box 171, 25 Quabbin Road
Mallorytown, ON K0E 1R0

Olive Brinson
PO Box 733
Tweed, ON K0K 3T0
Erlma Haldenby
12 Paxton Street, RR 1
Holyrood, ON N0G 2B0

Merry Lider
547 Robin Road
Vernon, BC V1B 3B2

Mavis McKay
406 Lakeside Green
St. Albert, AB, T9N 3T3

Alyth Mutart
Box 312
Woodville, ON K0M 2T0

Marina Onclin
313 – 934 Heritage Way
Saskatoon, SK S7H 5R9

Cathy Reid
489 Skyline Avenue
London, ON N5X 4L2

Margaret Reynolds
202 – 7 Annette Street
Morrisburg, ON K0C 1X0

Joan Wagner
30-375 Scott Street E.
Strathroy, ON N7G 4G7

Joan Willsie
381 Admiral Street
Woodstock, ON N4S 5A7

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS (SYNODICAL PRESIDENTS)
Ina Borger
309 Lamont Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0G2

Millie Freeman
56 Michigan Street
Devon, AB T9G 1J4

Carolyn Jones
22 Bridgenorth Crescent
Etobicoke, ON M9V 2M3

Lois Klempa
155 Chemin du Lac Louise N.,
RR 6
Wentworth, QC J8H 3W8

Jessie Knox
103 Organ Crescent
Hamilton, ON L8T 1Y8

Betty McLagan
#214 – 22015 – 48th Avenue
Langley, BC V3A 8L3

Arline Sanderson
1410 Hill Street
Grasswood, SK S7T 1A9

(LIFE & MISSION AGENCY)
Rick Fee
General Secretary
Life and Mission Agency
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Carolyn Jones
Anna Cook
Joan Smith

WMS STAFF
Executive Director
Sarah Kim

Program & Marketing Coordinator
Alexis McKeown (on maternity leave as of January 2010)

Editor, Glad Tidings
Colleen Wood (on maternity leave)
Heather Jones (Interim Editor)

Manager, The Book Room
Susan Clarke

Book Room Resource Consultant
Tricia Browne (on maternity leave as of mid-February 2010)
Grace Kim

Administrative Assistant & Circulation Manager
Katherine Allen

Financial Officer (part-time)
Elza Furzer

Forward in Faith

Treasurers of groups, Presbyterials and Synodicals (and even Council) have a big job! A treasurer is a bookkeeper, banker and an authority on the subject of finances. She (or he) must understand, and frequently explain, where the funds come from and where they go. Most times the treasurer is the person who gets that job done. (We have Elza Furzer to do that for Council – thank you Elza!)

The WMS has guidelines for treasurers that should have been given to you when you started as treasurer. Currently, we are updating these guidelines. We hope to have them approved by Council in May 2010, and circulated soon after that. If you have experience as a treasurer, or simply helpful words to share as we are preparing the new guidelines, I'd be glad to hear from you. I would like to have five or six experienced treasurers review the draft. The more input we have, the better the guidelines will be.

One concern I have heard frequently relates to the filing of the annual Registered Charity Information Return with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). All Treasurers who are required to file this return should have their 2009 package by now. Please don't forget to do this. You have six months following your year-end to file. Anyone who has a charitable number MUST follow the regulations outlined by the CRA. Failure to file may mean your charitable number is revoked and your organization subject to a fine. Even if you have a very small amount of money involved, you must file this return annually. If the account is no longer being used, it should be closed in the proper manner. Do not issue tax receipts if you are not complying with the CRA!

One of the new ways of preparing this return is by using an electronic version of the T3010B form. It is a "fillable and saveable" form found on the CRA web-site "www.cra.gc.ca" Some of the other accompanying forms are also available at this site. You cannot file the return electronically, but not having to write everything by hand is a bonus. If the CRA report is causing you concern, please contact me. I will be glad to help.

In closing, I would like to extend thanks to all Treasurers. You have taken on extra duties within the WMS. Without your help, we would have considerable difficulty collecting and distributing funds to all the projects that we sponsor. Keep up the good work!

Janet Brewer
Council Treasurer

To contact the Council Treasurer, check the 'Contact Us' feature of the WMS website: www.wmspcc.ca or call the office (800-619-7301), and leave a message (including your telephone number). Janet will return your call as soon as possible.

Changing your name or address?
New Subscriber?

Use this form to send a change of address, or to forward a new subscription. If you are moving, please let us know at least six weeks before.
(For renewals, contact the *Glad Tidings* Secretary of your local group.)

For change of address

Name: _____

New Address: _____

_____

_____

For change in address attach mailing label here

For new Subscribers

Name: _____ Name of Church _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Payment

Subscription rate: $14.00 (including GST) for 2009 (GST registration #107856783)

Amount enclosed $_____ (make cheque payable to *Glad Tidings*)

Credit card number: _____ Expiry date: _____

❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard Signature _____

Clip out and forward to: ***Glad Tidings*** Circulation
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
Phone: 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 326
Fax: 416-441-2825
email: Kallen@presbyterian.ca

Welcome Julianne!

The WMS and *Glad Tidings* are pleased to celebrate the birth of Julianne Miranda McKeown, born to WMS Program and Marketing Coordinator Alexis McKeown, and her husband Rob, on January 9, 2010. Baby Julianne, big brother Nathan, and the proud parents, are all doing well.

Congratulations!

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

We are always ready to help you promote *Glad Tidings*. If you are planning a special event, meeting, or Mission Awareness Sunday, we can supply you with up to 20 copies of current or back issues of the magazine. The stories in *Glad Tidings* cover a wide range of issues and ideas. You can create interest by highlighting some articles in your weekly bulletin thereby encouraging others to read and learn more about the mission work of the church and the WMS.

On a more practical note, we are still looking for 18 outstanding subscription lists. It is helpful to have the lists of subscribers returned to the office so that we can keep of our records accurate and up-to-date.

If a subscriber you know does not receive their magazine, please check with the post office or your Glad Tidings secretary and contact us in the office as soon as possible so that we can try and solve the problem. When corresponding with us, it is helpful to include the group number located just above your name on the label of your magazine. It looks like this: 1800598 P01 000123

Remember, even though renewals are due in November, it is never too late to subscribe to Glad Tidings. Any time someone wishes to subscribe, just send in their name and address and we will add their name(s) to the list. We will also send these new subscribers back issues of the magazine if requested.

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing the information and articles from Glad Tidings is a great way to remind people of the work of the WMS and the mission community that serves our church. When you have finished reading your copy, share:

- "What Would Jesus Drink" with your congregational justice committee, and the people who host coffee hour.
- "Love Like Breathing" with the leader of a bible study group or youth group in your congregation.
- The review of "My Name is Sangoel" with the church librarian and the church school coordinator.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Madge Dickson
Northern WMS
Atwood, ON

Gladys Greer
Lillian Dickson Group
St. Andrew's, Calgary, AB

Truus Hasselaar
St. Andrew's, Kingston, ON

Ruth Puddicombe
Dorothy Lukes Auxiliary
Knox, Midland, ON

Doris Hyde
Knox, North Easthope, ON

Diane Robinson
Essan– Oro WMS, Orillia, ON

Marguerite Stephenson
Ruth McLean Aux
St. Andrews, Petrolia, ON

Hazel Olson
Whalley Presbyterian Church
Surrey, BC

Mrs. C. Audrey
St. Andrew's, Trenton, ON

Muriel Belanger
Knox, Vankleek Hill, ON
Kenyon, Dunvegan, ON

Frances Lockwood
Renfrew, ON

Doris Martin
St. Andrew's, Welland, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son...

None of us leaves this life without having given everything away – to someone, somewhere.

The only question for us is this: to whom do we want to bequeath the wealth God has entrusted to us?

God changed the world through God's planned gift. Our planned gifts can help change the world, too.
A gift annuity can provide seed money for a new youth ministry and extra income for you and your spouse as long as you live. A gift of stock given directly to the church can save lives through PWS&D's relief work while simultaneously increasing the tax benefits to you.

Contact the Planned Giving Office,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
to learn how your gifts can make a lasting difference.
1-800-619-7301, plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca
www.presbyterian.ca/plannedgiving

Planting seeds of hope. For generations to come.

PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address

Glad Tidings

May/June 2010

Contents

Features

Touring Fair Trade
Cathy Finlay
Page 4

Come One, Come All
Amy MacLachlan
Page 10

13 **President's Message** . . . . . *Druse Bryan*
14 **How I Spent My Winter Vacation** . . . . . *Heather Jones*
18 **Mission History** . . . . . *Heather Jones*
22 **End Slavery Now** . . . . . *Heather Jones*
44 **WMS Certificates** . . . . . *Heather Jones*

Regulars

3 **From the Editor's Desk** . . . . .
28 **Book Reviews** . . . . .
30 **Mission in Action** . . . . .
35 **Forward in Faith** . . . . .
36 **In the Society** . . . . .
46 **Circulation News** . . . . .
47 **Pass Me Along** . . . . .
47 **In Remembrance** . . . . .

"Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 12:2

Cover Photo: Denise Van Wissen led the group of Canadians on the fair trade exposure tour. Photo taken by John Deschiffant.

Glad Tidings

May/June 2010
Volume 86, No. 3

INTERIM EDITOR
HEATHER JONES
DESIGN
ALEXIS McKEOWN
CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

Published six times a year by the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to the circulation department at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Phone (416) 441-1111. Fax (416) 441-2825. E-mail Editorial gladtidings@presbyterian.ca. Circulation kallen@presbyterian.ca. Publications mail registration number 09517. ISSN: 00170720.

We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Canada

Member of the Canadian Church Press and the Associated Church Press.

Subscription rate $14.00 including G.S.T. per year. Single copies $2.40. WMS members should send their subscriptions through their group *Glad Tidings* Secretary. Individual subscribers may order direct from *Glad Tidings*. Please make all money orders and cheques payable at par to *Glad Tidings*.

Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Heather Jones

From the Editor's Desk

In an on-line conversation recently, a friend said, "If the question is 'what's the meaning of life?', Scramble®[1] is as good an answer as any." I smiled, and remembered that *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* says that the answer to the ultimate question of life, the universe, and everything is 42. Unfortunately, in the book, the ultimate question is unknown.

Somehow that conversation stuck in my mind, and I realized that, though there are frequent jokes about the meaning of life, it is a concept that is central to faith. For some people, the meaning of life is getting to heaven. The lawyer in Luke 10 and the rich young man in Matthew 19 both ask Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" For others, focussing on life after death seems to avoid the question of the meaning of life on earth.

I certainly can't provide the answer to the meaning of life, but I can repeat the statement that I have often made: "It is not my job to tell anyone what to think; it is my job to make people think." It is my hope that the articles in this issue of *Glad Tidings* will make you, the readers, think. I hope that the articles about fair trade and tourism will encourage you to think about how our lifestyle choices impact on other people, here and around the world. I hope that the article on human trafficking encourages you to think about the needs of those who continue to be enslaved and oppressed in our world. I hope that the regular features of the magazine will encourage you to think about how the WMS contributes to the mission of the church.

Personally, I believe that Jesus' answers to the lawyer and the rich young man point to his belief that the meaning of life is found within the human community. The lawyer is reminded of the commandment to love God, and to love your neighbour as yourself. The rich man is encouraged to distribute his wealth to the poor, and join Jesus and the disciples as they carry out their ministry of teaching and healing. As they live in true community with the people around them, sharing love and caring for others, they will inherit eternal life. May we also live loving others, sharing our resources, and following Jesus.

[1] Scramble® is an on-line word game similar to Boggle®

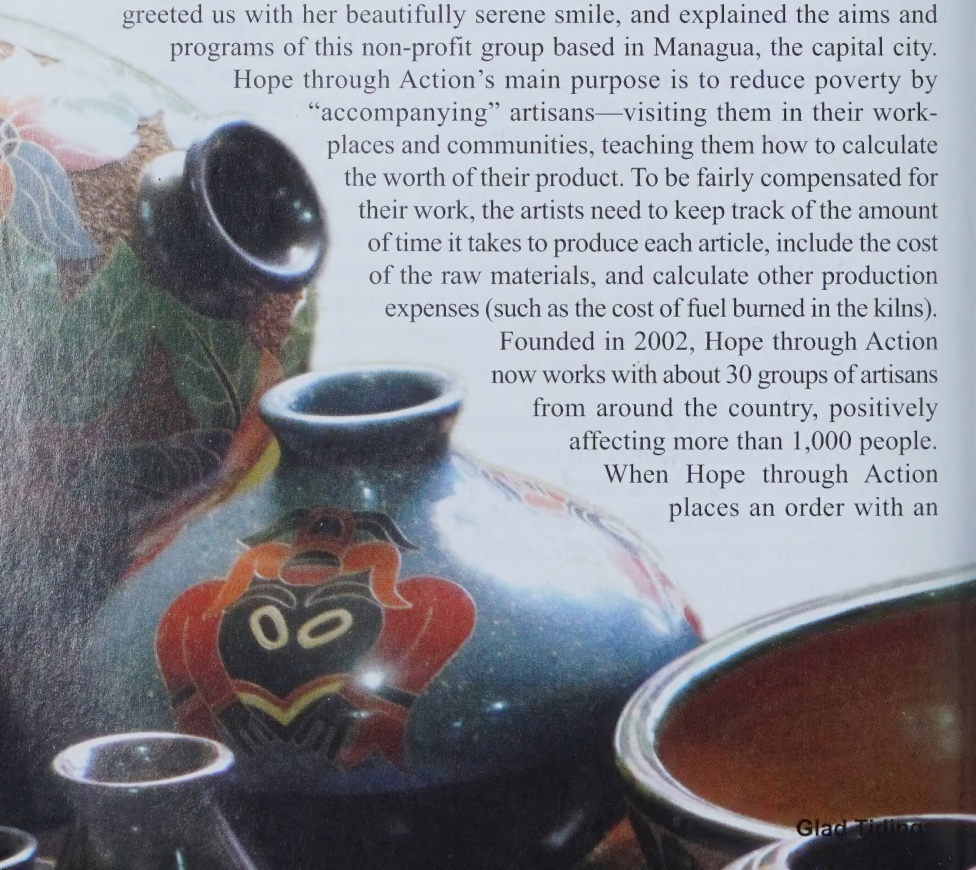
Touring Fair Trade

by Cathy Finlay

In early January, nine Canadians from across the country travelled to Nicaragua to witness the effects of Fair Trade. Although it may seem cliché to say, it is true: we will never to be the same people again.

We had the chance to experience three different Fair Trade industries: artisan crafts, coffee, and the textile industry. We also visited with staff of SOYNICA, the regional community agency where Denise Van Wissen-Zuniga works. Denise is now living in Guatemala and working with the Mayan women, but she accompanied us in Nicaragua, where she worked for many years.

Our first full day in Nicaragua began with a tour of *Esperanza en Accion* which translates as "Hope through Action." Yamileth Perez, Director of the Artisan Program, greeted us with her beautifully serene smile, and explained the aims and programs of this non-profit group based in Managua, the capital city. Hope through Action's main purpose is to reduce poverty by "accompanying" artisans—visiting them in their workplaces and communities, teaching them how to calculate the worth of their product. To be fairly compensated for their work, the artists need to keep track of the amount of time it takes to produce each article, include the cost of the raw materials, and calculate other production expenses (such as the cost of fuel burned in the kilns). Founded in 2002, Hope through Action now works with about 30 groups of artisans from around the country, positively affecting more than 1,000 people. When Hope through Action places an order with an



artisan, they pay 50% of the cost in advance so the artisan can purchase the necessary materials. Hope through Action also pays the transportation costs for the artisans to bring their work to the shop in Managua.

Committed to working with artisans living in poverty, this organization responds to the needs that are expressed by the artists themselves. It offers the artisans assistance in the following areas:

- calculating fair wages
- small business training
- small loans
- creating connections to Fair Trade markets, of which Europe is the biggest and fastest growing (60%–70% of Fair Trade products are sold in Europe)

They also offer social and economic justice education to the artisans, who receive ¼ to ⅓ more wages than artisans who are not working through Fair Trade organizations.

Over the years, Yamileth has noticed a dramatic increase in the quality of the work produced by each cooperative or family. She always asks each artist to sign their work to reduce the threat of intermediaries who pay little for the products and then sell them in markets elsewhere as their own. In some cases, the artisans sell their best quality work to Hope through Action, and their lesser quality work to intermediaries.

Later in the week, we toured Ducale Grande, a pottery co-operative which is assisted by Hope through Action. We watched one of the potters throw a pot, while another demonstrated the decorative and firing processes.

The children we met within the co-operative were giggling and playing happily together. They were proud to pose for us. But outside the cooperative's buildings, as we entered and left the community, I saw faces with the same blank expressions that I have seen on the faces of people at home who have lost hope.

Our next Fair Trade stop was at Tierra Nueva, a Fair Trade Coffee Co-operative in Boaco, in the mountains of Central Nicaragua. Here we were introduced to several co-operative members including the director, who explained to us their various programs as well as the benefits to the farm families of belonging to the co-operative:

- fair prices for their produce
- improved access to low or no-interest loans
- better social services including health care and education
- collectively owned transport and processing equipment and communication systems
- technical training and skill diversification for co-op members and their families

When we arrived at the coffee farm, we were greeted by the farmers themselves, who explained how the profits from the co-operative are returned to them, giving them access to advantages such as more substantial housing and education for their children.

We were billeted with several different farm families, and several of us enjoyed a steep trek up the mountainside to find our rooms for the night. Our accommodation was very basic. Like almost 40% of rural Nicaraguan homes, the house we stayed in

did not have running water. There was a community well that provided water for the household. Outdoor shower stalls and pit latrines served as sanitation for most in the community.

Following her daily routine, our hostess rose at 4:00 a.m. to prepare breakfast on a cement table, cooking it on a wood-fired cement stove. In most of the homes, there is no stovepipe so many of the women have respiratory ailments. A couple of hours later we gathered for breakfast. It was a special treat for us to enjoy freshly picked coconut with our meal. We then set off to the farm to pick coffee.

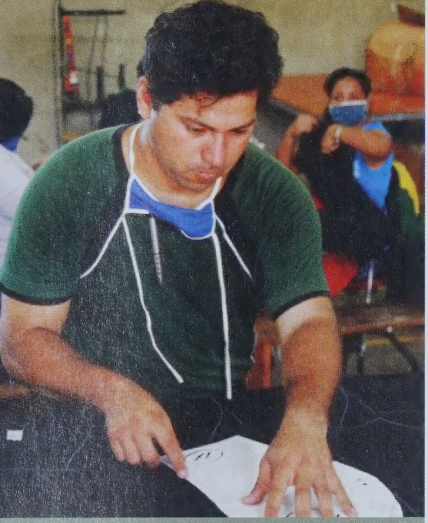
We were taken into the coffee fields, and taught about the various sizes of the plants. It takes three or four years for a coffee plant to become productive. The ground underfoot is uneven and steep. We were surprised to learn that some varieties of coffee cherries are red and some are yellow. Cherry picking is all done by hand, with the cherries dropped into baskets that are carried around the waist.

The next step in the process is crushing the cherries so the pulp falls. The pulp is saved to be used for compost, which

"When I was young, I didn't have the opportunity to study, and for that reason I give thanks to Fair Trade because it has enabled me to pay for my studies as an adult. I now have an undergraduate degree in engineering and a graduate degree in sustainable agriculture. I am educating my children as I would have liked to have been educated at their age."

Blanca Rosa Molina, Cecocafen Member, Nicaragua
Quoted from the TransFair Canada Coffee Fact Sheet

Blanca Rosa Molina went on to become president of CECOCAFEN, which is only slightly smaller than PRODECOOP, and then Mayor of her town, San Ramon, just outside of Matagalpa City.



With Fair Trade income we have made improvements to our community. Before, we slept on the ground and did not have basic amenities. Now some of us have floors, some furniture, sanitary services, and potable water. If we sold all our production at Fair Trade prices our dreams would come true."

Alexa Marin Colindres,
Prodecoop Member, Nicaragua
Quoted from the TransFair Canada Coffee Fact Sheet

feeds the worms lavishly. The beans are then separated to be washed overnight, sun-dried, and packed into hundred-pound bags that are then trekked down the mountain by horse or mule. These bags are all taken to a central location where they are gathered and shipped to the processing plant.

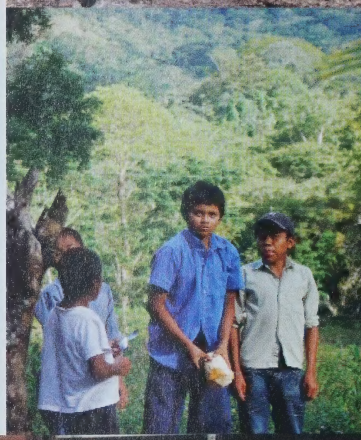
At the processing plant, the beans are first raked into long rows on cement patios to dry. For the final drying stage, the beans are shovelled into mounds until they are dry enough to be sorted into different grades. Once sorted, the beans are again packed into hundred-pound bags for shipment to both domestic and international markets. After witnessing this process, we were finally given the opportunity to experience a coffee cupping, similar to a wine tasting.

Our final Fair Trade experience involved the textile industry. Our morning started with a tour to a FREE Trade Zone. After watching a glitzy, slick, expensive presentation in an air-conditioned boardroom, we toured one of the factories (more appropriately called a 'sweatshop'). Here, we were not allowed to speak to the workers or take photos. We were accompanied by a security guard along with the mid-level manager who acted as translator for us. Working conditions are distressing and the minimum wage had just risen to the equivalent of US$1.25 per hour. Although this industry does provide jobs, mainly for single parent women whose alternative would be the sex trade or domestic service, the working conditions are very bad, there is little or no job security, and no encouragement for

the women to develop their skills. In addition, many of these companies are notorious for ignoring the environmental impact of these factories, and all of the profits from Free Trade enterprises return to the companies in developed countries where the factories are owned, such as the US, Korea, and Japan.

In stark contrast, that afternoon we toured the Nueva Vida Textile Co-operative where the working conditions were much better. There were soft seats and back supports on the chairs; an open, airy working area that was well lit; and safety measures were in place. The whole atmosphere was different: the workers looked happy. Tomasina Perez, the president of the co-op explained that the profits are returned to the owners/workers. These profits are used to benefit members' families through increased education, better nutrition and health care, and better living conditions overall. We were all happy to "stimulate the economy" by shopping in the cooperative's store.

Cathy Finlay is a retired teacher and an elder at Leaside Presbyterian Church in Toronto.



A National Presbyterian Event for All Women

by Amy MacLachlan

A national women's conference, hosted by the Women's Missionary Society and the Atlantic Mission Society on May 20–23, 2011, will feature Dr. Margaret Somerville, ethicist and professor at McGill University in Montreal. The sometimes-controversial speaker—who founded the McGill Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law—will present the keynote address. Rev. Sarah Kim, WMS executive director, is

looking forward to hearing her speak. "We're hoping that whether the women agree or disagree with her viewpoints, they will at least be challenged by her words and will think through her ideas," Rev. Kim said. The National Presbyterian Women's Gathering will be held just north of Toronto, in Richmond Hill, ON, and is open to all women over the age of 18. The event's organizers hope grandmothers will bring along their grand-daughters, and mothers their daughters. Druse Bryan, WMS outgoing president, said she hopes the conference will help buoy up women in the church: "The PCC is becoming congregational in some ways, and this will allow women to come together, to be themselves, and realize they're not alone. We hope this will really mean something to the women in the church."

Though the idea was finally approved in the Fall of 2008, it came together over time and a series of discussions, as well as travels to other countries where women's gatherings are common place and very much loved. Presbyterian Women—the PC (USA)'s women's organization—has been holding an event like this every three years, and it is always much-anticipated and hugely successful.

Rev. Kim noted that such events are often even more meaningful for women who live in rural or remote areas, and who may rarely have an opportunity to gather in large numbers with other women. "We often hear that women are the backbone of the church, and we have the sense that women want to have a national gathering," she said. "It's time to have this. It's long overdue. We hope women will come and be transformed, revived, and renewed. We hope they will forge new friendships,

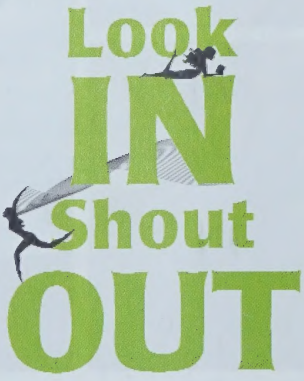
DATE: May 20-23, 2011

PLACE: Sheraton Parkway Hotel,
Richmond Hill (GTA), Ontario

REGISTRATION FEES:
$325 before November 15, 2010
$425 before March 31, 2011
Family Rate: $50.00 off per person (18 years and over)

INQUIRIES:
skim@presbyterian.ca
(416) 441-1111 OR 1-800-619-7301 Extension 321

For more information visit: www.womensgathering.ca



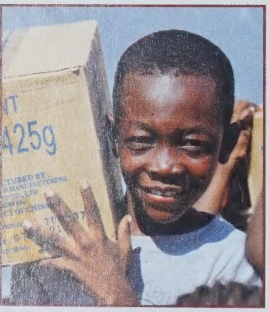
grow together, learn together, and just enjoy being together."

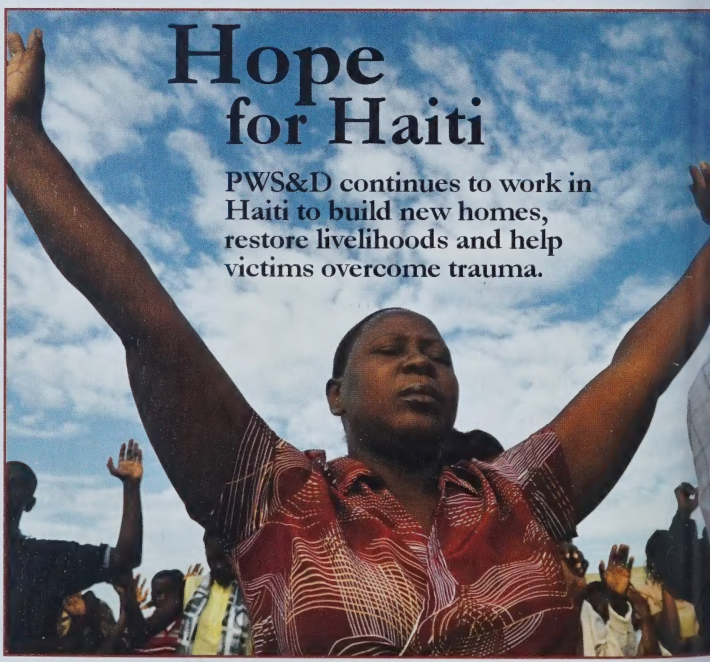
The event's theme is "Look In, Shout Out" and is based on the idea of being transformed as found in Romans 12. It will feature 27 workshops centred on five themes: women, justice, mission, leadership development, and spirituality. Ecumenical and international guests will also be featured.

The planning team stressed that while the WMS and AMS are planning the conference, the event is open to all women from across the country. The hope is for 800 to attend, though the meeting space has a capacity for 1,200. If successful, it is possible that the conference will become a regular occurrence.

Family rates and subsidies are available, if needed, and prizes—including free registration and free hotel accommodations—are up for grabs to those registered by Nov. 15, 2010. The final deadline for registering is Mar. 31, 2011. For more information on speakers, workshops, worship leaders, funding, location and registration instructions, visit www.womensgathering.ca, or call the WMS office.

Amy McLachlan is a staff writer for The Presbyterian Record.





Presbyterian World Service & Development
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd ◆ 1-800-619-7301 ext. 291 ◆ 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

President's Message

I've said this before, and will no doubt say it again—time seems to fly when you're having fun! The last three years have just flown by and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as President of the WMS. I do want to acknowledge the generous travel budget allotted each year for the president's travel, which has meant that I have been able to visit places and people that were beyond even my wildest dreams. I've seen the sun setting over the flat plains near Lagos in Nigeria, looked down from the high cliffs overlooking the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, had my picture taken sitting on a bench with the magnificent Taj Mahal in India in the background, looked down the long expanse of the Rift Valley in Kenya, seen Mount Kilimanjaro (from the air), enjoyed a lovely caleche ride through the streets of Lunenburg, listened to the ' Tosca' in the beautiful opera house in Budapest, mastered the intricacies of the Tokyo subway system—well you get the picture! I will admit to one minor disappointment: although I have been to Malawi twice, I have yet to see an elephant!

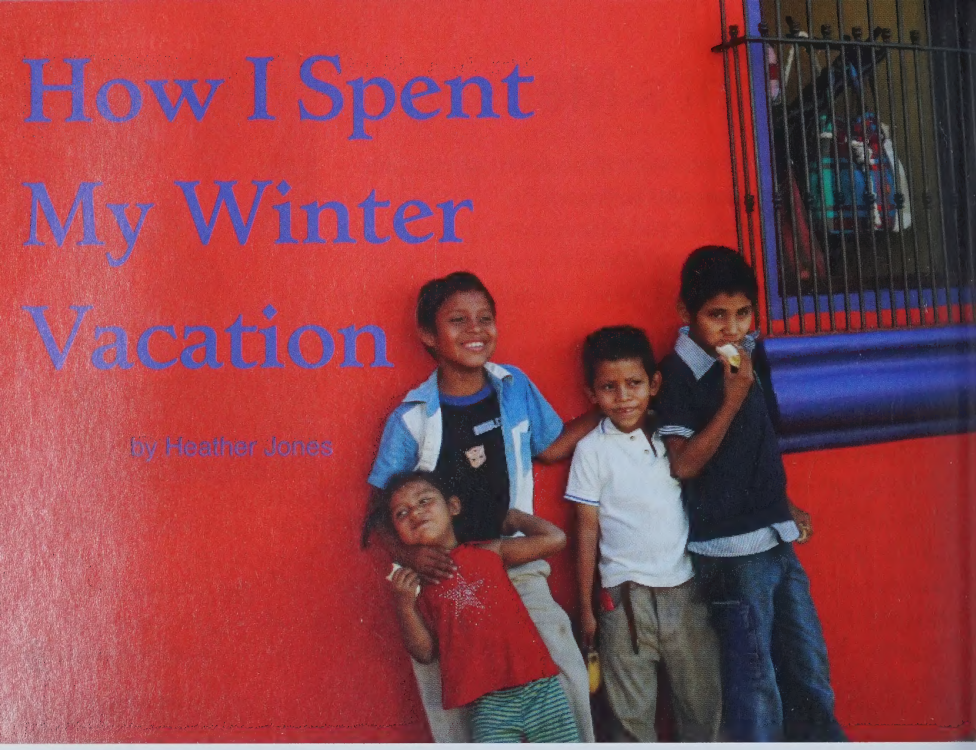
What has all this to do with the WMS, you may ask. All of these experiences were made possible by invitations received from partner churches or from women's groups within these churches. Maintaining these links among Presbyterian women around the world is invaluable. We learn to appreciate what we have as women in the church here in Canada, and also to realise how much more we can be by learning from the examples of our sisters whose lives have such different challenges from those that we face. To have had the privilege of visiting some of the projects which the WMS members, both nationally and individually, have supported over the years has been both humbling and inspiring.

Despite the changes that we know we have to face in the Society, we can be confident and even a little proud of what has been achieved over the years by the WMS, all of which was done for the glory of God and the spreading of the Word. Mission was, is, and will remain, our main purpose and focus. Although the ways of doing mission may have changed over the almost 150 years since some women in Montreal were moved to respond to the plight of women in the poorer areas of the city, we will continue our service. I am honoured to have been chosen to serve as your president over the last three years. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity, for all the prayers, love and support, and for the warm hospitality I received as I travelled among you. I look forward to meeting you all in May 2011 at the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering.

Druse Bryan

How I Spent My Winter Vacation

by Heather Jones



My husband and I love to travel. It is probably one of the things that brought us together. We love to go to new places, to see different things, and to learn about different cultures. Unfortunately, neither of us is fluent in any language other than English, and we're not particularly adventurous. So, when we travel, we are tourists.

Researching possibilities for our recent trip, I was at first surprised, and then intrigued, to learn that there was a section for El Salvador in the travel brochure. When the travel agent mentioned it as an option, the images that immediately came to my mind were all from the movie *Romero*: the tortured priest being released from prison, the school bus full of peasants on the way to a protest being evacuated and then destroyed by machine-gun fire, Archbishop Oscar Romero being shot while celebrating communion in a San Salvador hospital chapel.

As I was looking at the agent, wondering which one of us was out of touch with reality, my husband was already excitedly pointing to the descriptions of excursions to Mayan ruins and volcanoes. This is 2010, Romero was killed in 1980. That was 30 years ago. I realized that I was the one out of touch. I realized that I had heard virtually nothing about El Salvador in more than 15 years. The civil war ended in the early 1990s. Like so many countries,

El Salvador had passed out of the headlines, and, at least in my mind, had slipped into obscurity.

The tour book showed beautiful beaches. Internet research promised hot weather, sunshine, and ocean breezes. The travel clinic warned against drinking the water, but that is an almost universal precaution when travelling in less developed countries. There were no other health concerns, at least for the areas we would be in. (Some areas of El Salvador do have malaria and dengue fever, but these are not near the capital or the coast.) The government of Canada site warned against gang-related violence in the cities, but noted that sensible precautions would keep tourists from being affected by this problem. So, we decided—El Salvador would be our destination!

The temperature, the sun, and the beach, all lived up to the promises made in the travel guide. The resort we stayed in had beautiful grounds, lovely restaurants, and staff who were friendly and helpful. We had a wonderful time relaxing and catching up on our reading and resting. We also had some opportunities to learn about El Salvador.

The tour guides who led the excursions we took were very knowledgeable, and eager to share their country's story with the visitors. The guides we met (4 in total) opened their tours with background information about the country. On every trip we heard about the war, the recent elections (March, 2009), and the hopes for the tourism industry.

The war continues to affect the economy and the culture of El Salvador. The main source of this lingering effect is the migration of people during the war. Hundreds of thousands of people fled the violence of El Salvador in the 1980s, many of them settling in the US, particularly in Los Angeles. One of the guides told us that while the map of El Salvador shows 14 departments (provinces), there are really 15. Los Angeles has a higher number of Salvadorans living there than 13 of the 14 departments in El Salvador. The Salvadoran 'Diaspora' continues to have significant impact on the economy of the country, since many of those living and working outside of the country are sending remittances home to support family members still living in poverty.

One of our guides, Miguel, talked about the connection between the war and the current problems of gang-related violence in El Salvador. Some of the Salvadoran refugees who ended up in Los Angeles in the 1980s, formed gangs there to protect themselves against the other established gangs, who controlled certain areas of the city. Many of these people have since returned to El Salvador, either willingly, or because they have been deported from the US. Unfortunately, they have brought their gang allegiances and activities with them. Miguel explained that the two main gangs in El Salvador are MS 13 and the 18th Street Gang. They were based on 13th and 18th Streets in Los Angeles.

A point that each of our tour guides was proud to share was that after 20 years of power being held by the ARENA party, the country had elected a new president, from a new party, last year. US politician Howard L. Berman, in a meeting with the new President of El Salvador, said: "The real test of democracy taking hold comes when you could have a successful transition of power from one political party to another, and your election last year manifested that indeed in El Salvador democracy has taken hold."[1] The Salvadorans we had the chance to speak with were hopeful about this new government. One of the first things that it has done is to institute social security for seniors.

Perhaps because they work in the tourism industry, all of our guides outlined the very important role of tourism in the country's plans for the future. Tourism has been growing very quickly, and all indicators are that it will continue to grow. In the 10 years from 1998 to 2008, tourism in El Salvador grew from 0.4% of the Gross Domestic Product to 4.6%. In just one year, revenue from tourism increased more than 35%.[2]

As pleased as we were to be contributing to the bright hopes for El Salvador's future, my husband and I did have some concerns. Most North American tourists expect (perhaps demand is the more accurate word) a fairly high standard of living when they are travelling, regardless of the standards accepted by local people. Knowing that only about 65% of Salvadorans have access to water in their homes made it even more difficult for us to see our fellow tourists walking away from the poolside showers without turning off the water. It was similarly difficult to watch the groundskeepers working so hard to keep the resort's hedges and grass looking lush, when I knew that their vegetable gardens would never be watered so generously.

My limited experience of the Salvadoran people, and perhaps my own outlook on life, led me to expect some good-natured bartering as I shopped in the craft market. One of the tours I took included a walk-through of the local vegetable market. I was excited to see a variety of banana that we don't see very often here in Canada, so I asked the

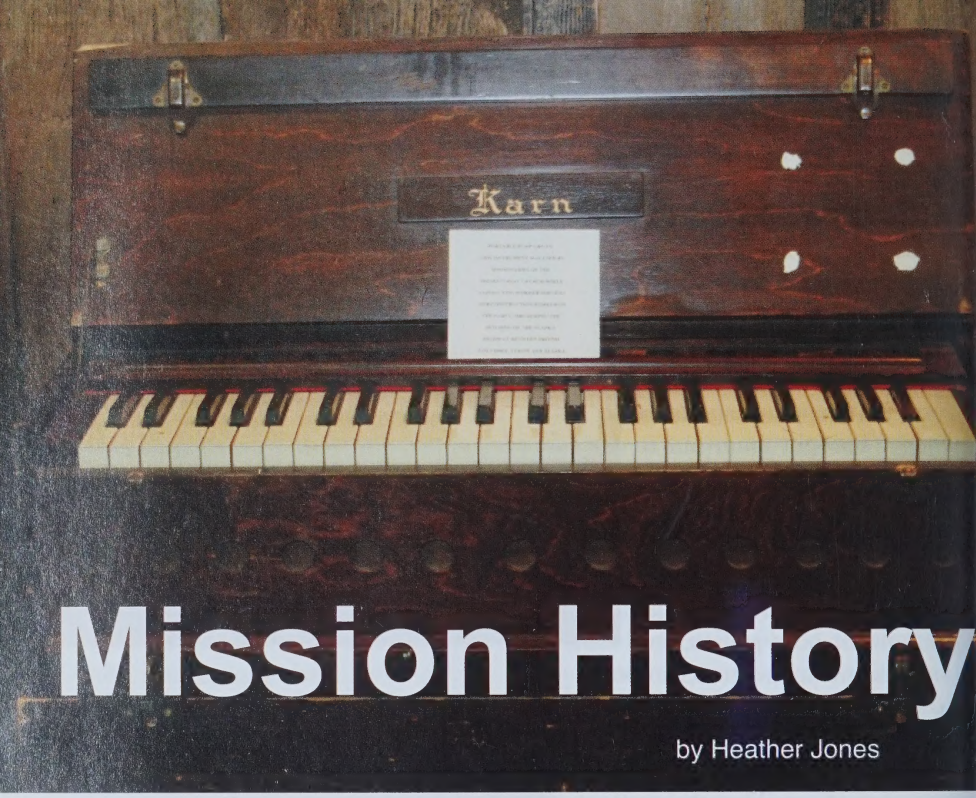
young girl selling them how many I would get for US$1. Her eyes bulging, she lifted the largest hand (clump) from her, passed them to me, and broke her second largest hand in half, wanting to give me those as well. I politely declined, handed over my dollar, and tried to put my 14 bananas in my nylon shopping bag. Later, when I brought them out to share with some others on the tour, I was stunned when one of the men said: "How much did they rip you off for those?" It was just one more example of how selfish and insensitive some tourists can be.

I am left with questions in my mind about whether or not tourism is going to be such a wonderful thing for El Salvador. Certainly the influx of money will help the economy, but what will be the cost? Turning away from the opportunity is not a viable option, but how can the excesses of Western expectations be mitigated? As always, I have hope for education. In this case, I'm not thinking of improved education for El Salvadorans. I'm hoping for some education for tourists. Our affluence can facilitate our travel. My hope is that our travel can facilitate our education. We could learn a lot from Salvadorans, and other residents of countries poorer than ours, about how to live more with less, and about how to focus on the positive and celebrate what we have, rather than worrying constantly about how to get more.

My final observation from El Salvador also comes from the shopping tour I took. The tour was offered on Sunday, so we saw churches in three different towns. In each town, and in virtually every church in the country, according to Miguel, the churches are full to overflowing on Sunday mornings. People were crowded around every doorway of every church, in many cases listening to the service from two to three feet outside the building. I've heard too many people complain about uncomfortable pews in Canadian churches. If those who complain could witness the faith of those who stand outside through a whole service, perhaps they would learn something as well.

[1] Quoted in the LA Times, March 10, 2010

[2] Lonely Planet Guide to Central America, El Salvador chapter



Mission History

by Heather Jones

It is often true that those who have resources or attractions close to hand, fail to take advantage of them. For example, though she lived 85% of her life in Toronto, my mother never visited Ontario Place or the Ontario Science Centre. I recently realized that I was following in her footsteps, at least with respect to the National Presbyterian Museum. Though I live in the GTA, and frequently spend time in the city, I had never visited the facility, which is housed in St. John's Presbyterian Church, near Broadview and Gerrard. There are many ways that I am proud to be following my mother's example, but I decided that this wasn't one of them.

I think that the item that most impressed me when I visited the National Presbyterian Museum wasn`t even an artefact. It was a sign: "No account of the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada would be complete without a visual record of her far-flung missionary enterprises around the world. Beginning with John Geddes' mission to the South Seas, George Leslie Mackay's to Formosa or William John McKenzie's to Korea, the church of the second half

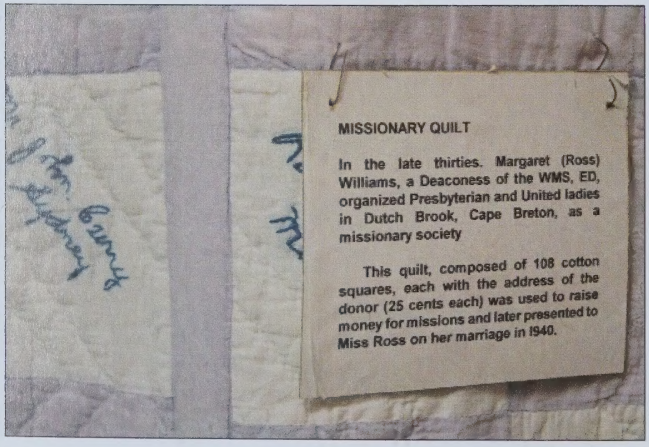
of the 19th century grasped the challenge of bringing the gospel to 'all the world'."

While the notice that introduces the visual record of our church's missionary enterprises only mentions three of the men who served our church overseas, it seemed to me that many, perhaps even most of the mission-oriented displays, pay tribute to the work of the women who have served our denomination's missionary endeavours. Figurines from Doreen Morrison, musical instruments from Mary Nichol, and elaborate needle work from Mary Whale help the museum visitor get a feel for life in the Bhil field of India. The pump organ, used by Agnes Conkey in post-wartime worship services conducted for the construction workers in northern BC and the Yukon, gives a glimpse of the dedication of the women who planted churches on the Canadian frontiers. Artefacts from CGIT and Mission Band groups show some of the ways that Mission Education was done. There is a quilt made by the women of Dutch Brook, Cape Breton, to raise money for missions; it shows visitors just one example of the ways that so many members have been quietly but actively involved in the missionary witness of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

There is a fascinating collection of banners in the entrance way to the museum. A few of them chronicle the history of immigration in Canada. It was certainly news to me that the population of Canada virtually doubled between 1900 and 1912! What was seen then as 'foreign mission work within our own land', we now recognize as the beginning of the brilliantly diverse cultural mosaic that is Canada today. The WMS Policy articulated on the

banners says: "Hospital work as an entrance; Educational work as a base; Evangelism as an end." Clearly the church did not succeed in converting all, or even most, of the new Canadians, who represented 79 different religions, to Christianity. Perhaps the folks who set that goal for themselves felt that they had failed. I hope that they didn't feel that way. I hope that they recognized that, following the example of Jesus, they reached out and cared for these newcomers with Christian love. They offered material support, language instruction, and cultural orientation. They succeeded in setting the foundation for a society of toleration and respect.

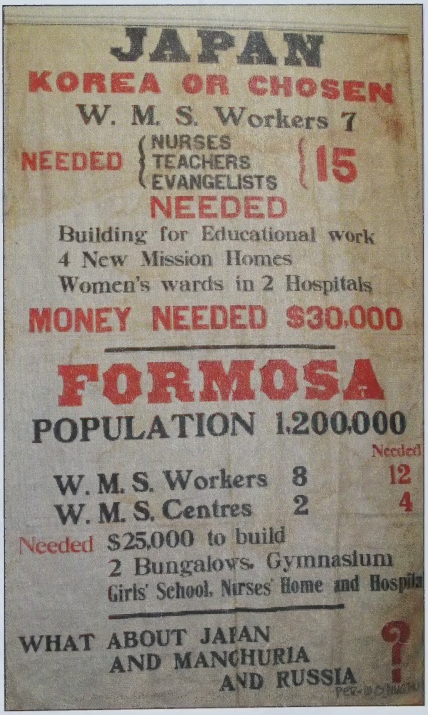
There are other banners that focus on the overseas work of the church. Here again the methods of evangelism are clearly through healthcare and education. Some of these banners appear to be part of a recruiting campaign. A poster focusing on India states that the immediate needs are "100 more Women Missionaries: 1 in 5 a doctor, 1 in 5 a nurse, 1 in 5 a teacher." The WMS was building schools and hospitals then, and we are still involved in the schools and hospitals of India. If that seems to be discouraging, it might be good to consider the need, as articulated in the banner: "So numerous are the villages (of India) that if Christ had remained on earth and visited one village every day of the 1,900 years since, he would not have overtaken the 740,000 villages."


MISSIONARY QUILT
In the late thirties. Margaret (Ross) Williams, a Deaconess of the WMS, ED, organized Presbyterian and United ladies in Dutch Brook, Cape Breton, as a missionary society
This quilt, composed of 108 cotton squares, each with the address of the donor (25 cents each) was used to raise money for missions and later presented to Miss Ross on her marriage in 1940.

Our WMS, and other mission-minded Presbyterians, still have an uphill struggle to

keep the mission and outreach work of the church in the forefront of our members' minds. It seems clear that those who have collected and arranged the artefacts on display at the Presbyterian Museum are working with us to raise awareness of the mission work of the church. It is my hope, and my prayer, that others will support, and take advantage of this resource—which happens to be the only denominational museum in existence in Canada—to stimulate reflection on our history, and to inspire gratitude for those who have served the historical mission of our church.

The PCC Committee on History manages the Presbyterian Museum. The facility is open to visitors by appointment. Many WMS groups and members have organized group tours, either as a day trip from communities in South-Western Ontario, or as part of their attendance at regional or national events. Because the Museum is currently staffed only by volunteers, the Committee on History requested, and received, approval to seek funding from church courts and congregations that will be managed as the Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston Memorial Fund. Watch for information about this campaign over the coming months.



End Slavery Now

by Heather Jones

Some Facts

People should not be for sale. We are all human beings. We are all made in the image of the God who created us, who redeemed us, who sustains us. We should be treated with dignity and respect. People should not be bought and sold like property. It was more than 200 years ago that the British Parliament first outlawed the sale and purchase of human beings, which was the first legal step to end slavery. Most of us believe that the results of the Civil War in the US brought us that much closer to the end of slavery. Unfortunately, the reality is that there are more human beings enslaved now than there ever were in the Slave Trade of the 18th and 19th centuries.

That is an alarming statement, but among people concerned with the issue of slavery today, it is a widely recognized fact. It has also been stated that if the very different economies of the 18th and the 21st centuries were balanced, the 2010 price of a slave purchased in the 18th Century would be approximately $40,000. Today, men, women, and children can be purchased for as little as $50. Not only did we not end slavery 200 years ago, we have devalued people to the point that now they are basically disposable. When they are broken, spent, or used up, they are discarded like the kitchen gadget that is more expensive to repair than to replace.

All of these astounding facts are difficult to believe, and people of faith

are appalled. However, like so many tragic situations, most of us believe that these statistics apply to people far away, where cultural and economic values are so different from ours. It is terrible, but it isn't something that affects us here in Canada. Unfortunately that is not true either.

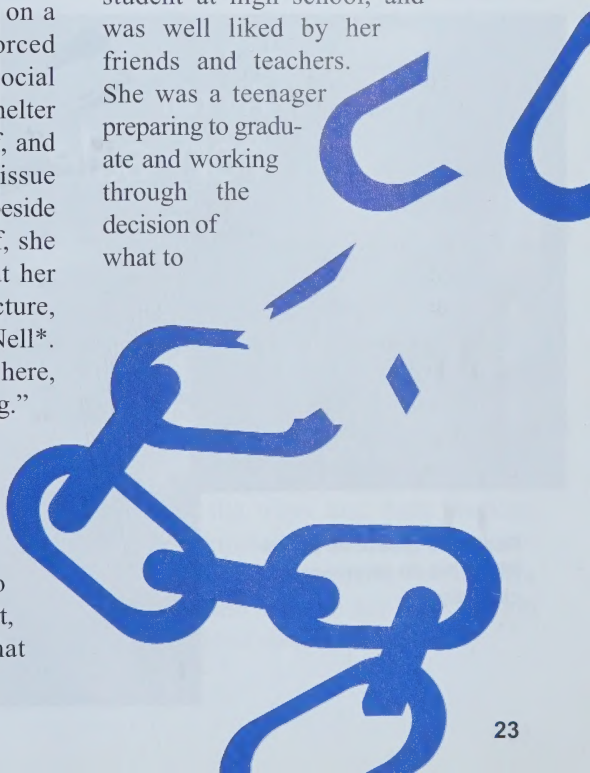
A Chance to Learn More

A conference on slavery and human trafficking was held recently in Ottawa. Because the WMS has taken on the task of bringing this issue before our church, it was decided that I should attend. As generally happens at events like this, those of us sitting at one table started chatting—introducing ourselves, and explaining our connection to the issue. The first person to speak at our table was a Ph.D. candidate, working on a dissertation on the topic of forced marriages. The second was a social worker with a Salvation Army shelter in Winnipeg. I introduced myself, and described my connection to the issue through the WMS. As the woman beside me prepared to introduce herself, she rummaged in her bag to pull out her cell phone. She pulled up a picture, showed it to us, and said, "I am Nell*. This is my daughter. As we speak here, she is a victim of human trafficking."

A Local Story

An odd stillness came over the small group of us. Nell's hands shook; tears slid from the corners of her eyes. I wanted to reach out, I wanted to offer comfort, or reassurance, but I knew that nothing I could say would match her agony. I felt that I needed to let Nell know that I respected her courage. I wanted to thank her for trusting us with her tragic story. I wanted to respond to Nell, but I was almost speechless as I struggled with my own reaction to her announcement. This woman was my age; her daughter was the age of many of my friends' children.

Over the next two days I had a few chances to speak with Nell. Everything I learned made me realize that however much I, or anyone I know, might want to think that victims of human trafficking and slavery are 'other people', we need to realize that it can happen to anyone, anywhere. Nell lives in a suburban area of Ottawa. Her daughter was a good student at high school, and was well liked by her friends and teachers. She was a teenager preparing to graduate and working through the decision of what to

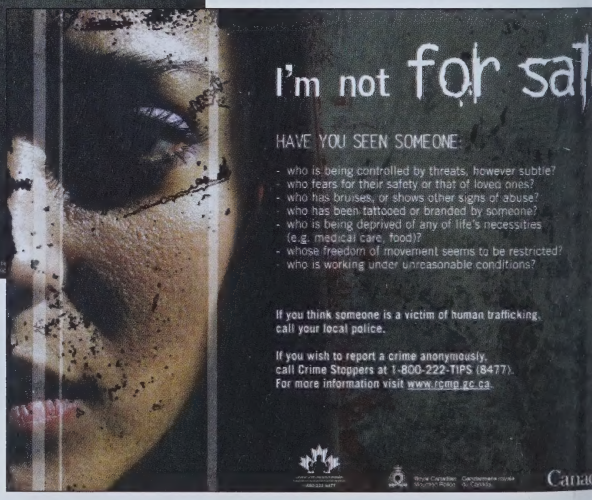


do next. She was victimized by a young man who found a way into the high school, and took time to 'befriend' her there. As Nell says, her daughter "fell in love with a wrong guy." Nell was concerned that he was older than her daughter, but could find nothing else—nothing more concrete—to warn her that this was a trap.

Within weeks, Nell's daughter had left home. Initially she was able to call home, but quite quickly the calls came less frequently, her daughter was less coherent, and soon was unable to tell her mother even where she was. The last time Nell spoke with her daughter, she learned that she was so frightened that she was trying to run away from her 'boyfriend'. Nell has since received confirmation that her daughter was caught and returned to the gang that 'owns' her. Nell knows that her daughter is being held against her will, forced to sell her body (though she never sees the money), and now not even allowed access to a telephone to contact her family. Nell's presence at the conference made all of us more deeply aware of the faces that are behind every statistic that we heard.

The Global Situation

There are too many stories like Nell's. There are stories of whole families, including children as young as 7 years, who are indentured workers in unsafe brick factories or cocoa plantation. For many of these families, this enslavement has gone on for generations. There are stories of young boys taken from their homes and sold into servitude in the bars that cater to the child sex-tourism 'industry' in Asia. All of the stories are part of the human trafficking industry that has an estimated value of US $32 billion


I'm not for sal
HAVE YOU SEEN SOMEONE:
- who is being controlled by threats, however subtle?
- who fears for their safety or that of loved ones?
- who has bruises, or shows other signs of abuse?
- who has been tattooed or branded by someone?
- who is being deprived of any of life's necessities (e.g. medical care, food)?
- whose freedom of movement seems to be restricted?
- who is working under unreasonable conditions?
If you think someone is a victim of human trafficking, call your local police.
If you wish to report a crime anonymously, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).
For more information visit www.rcmp.gc.ca.

Resource produced by the RCMP for an awareness campaign.

per year. In the face of the magnitude of the industry, and the depth of disgust and sorrow that are part of a normal human reaction to such injustice, any of us can find ourselves feeling overwhelmed and helpless. One of the wonderful benefits of a conference like the one held in Ottawa, is the opportunity to hear other stories—stories of people who are fighting, and winning, against those who take freedom and dignity from so many victims.

The name of the conference was Global Advocacy Days. There were representatives from organizations working at every level, in every context, to fight human trafficking. Loretta Noble, the representative of the Catholic Women's League, who first spoke to the WMS about this issue, was at the conference. So were social workers who staff shelters and community organizations that often provide refuge to women who manage to escape from those who would 'own' them. Members of the RCMP's Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre were present, sharing the work that they are doing to train law enforcement personnel and other front-line workers to recognize human trafficking and to be prepared to rescue victims. There were other organizations present whose efforts are focussed on the political sphere. There were also organizations which are involved in every aspect of the fight against human trafficking.

One Response

The main sponsor of the Global Advocacy Days event was an organization

MP Joy Smith sharing strategies to confront human trafficking at the Global Advocacy Days conference.

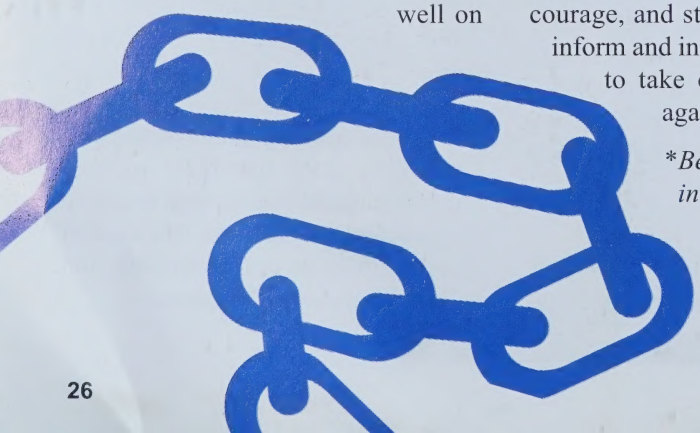
called "Not For Sale." The comprehensive approach and the scope of activity of this relatively new organization (founded in 2007) is a tribute to the energy, creativity, and commitment of the founders. David Batstone is the President, and he spoke at the conference on a number of occasions, including at a reception for MPs and Senators held on Parliament Hill. David shared the story of his own introduction to human trafficking. He was deeply disturbed to read in his local newspaper that one of his favourite restaurants was found guilty of enslaving workers. He learned that the restaurant owners had brought hundreds of people from India to work as cleaning and serving staff. One of the ways that these workers were intimidated was through threats to their families back in India. This incident spurred him to do further investigation in the global slavery situation.

In Thailand, he met Kru Nam, an artist who had discovered a group of young children living under a bridge near her home. In conversation with the children, she discovered that they had all escaped from the bars where they had been forced to serve foreigners who came to Thailand because of the easy availability of child prostitutes. Kru Nam proceeded to rescue more children from these bars. David was able to find protection for Kru Nam when her life was threatened by the people who had 'owned' the children she 'stole'. He also agreed to try to help her to care for these young people. His book *Not For Sale* was written with the expectation that the proceeds would help to build a home for Kru Nam and the approximately 150 children she had rescued.

What started out as a significant commitment to help find housing for some rescued children has grown into a community that has housing, health-care, and employment opportunities for many people who have escaped or been rescued from similar situations. One of the most impressive aspects of this project is that, while donor funds helped start the community, it is well on the way to being self-supporting. Workers at the textile factory receive their salary, and also have the opportunity to buy shares in the company. The housing that is being built will be sold to the community residents: they will be investing, rather than paying rent. The factory has succeeded in getting contracts to make apparel for some internationally-recognized companies. This is just one project, in one country. Not For Sale has other projects in Cambodia, Uganda, Peru, and Nepal. Learning about their work is an excellent anti-dote for the feeling of helplessness that can overwhelm us when we learn about the exploitation, degradation, and greed of the human trafficking industry.

Not For Sale is just one of the organizations working comprehensively against slavery and human trafficking. There are others that I hope our church can learn from, and perhaps work with, as we join the fight to End Slavery Now. The WMS has taken on responsibility for bringing this issue before our church. As we listen to the tragic stories of the victims, and the hope-filled stories of those who work on behalf of the victims, let us pray for guidance, courage, and strength, so that we can inform and inspire our denomination to take our place in the fight against human trafficking.

**Because of the ongoing investigations, the name of the mother in this story has been changed.*



We remember with thanks

The following people provided a charitable bequest from their estates to advance the mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada during 2009:

Winnifred Bean, Elizabeth Burgess, Edna Cameron, Marian Duncanson, Virginia Fleming, Gladys Lenore Grummett, Ina Hill, Margaret Agnes Hislop, William Johnston, Clarence McGillivray, Katharine MacKenzie, Mary Livingston Rae, Harold Alexander Scott, Douglas Graham Seaton, Edna Tansley, and Wilfred Webber.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada thanks God for their generosity and foresight and is grateful for the legacy of faith and hope they have bequeathed to the church. They are truly God's *ProVisionaries*. Their generosity will be celebrated during the 136th General Assembly in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

The Planned Giving Office, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
www.presbyterian.ca/plannedgiving

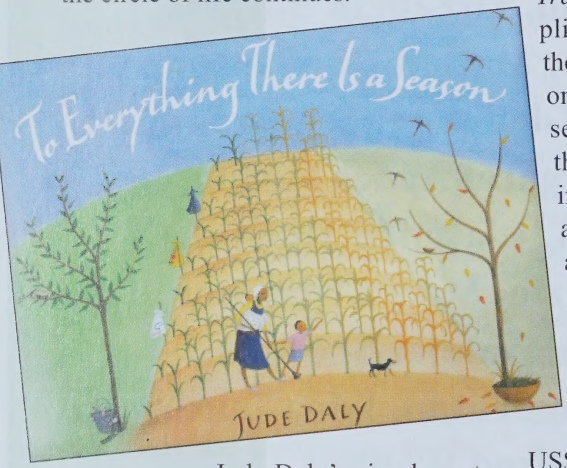
Planting seeds of hope. For generations to come.

proVisionaries

Book Reviews

To Everything There Is a Season
by Jude Daly

Spring turns to Summer. Summer turns to Fall. Fall leads to Winter. Life begins and life ends. From season to season, from generation to generation, the circle of life continues.



Jude Daly's simple, yet intriguing illustrations of life on a rural South African homestead, offer an invitation to explore the timeless words from the book of Ecclesiastes. *To Everything There Is a Season* is a book that inspires quiet moments of personal reflection. It is also a book that invites wondering and conversation. I can imagine children and adults exploring the incredible detail of the pictures together.

This collection of illustrations offers a unique way to interact with a well-known passage of Scripture.

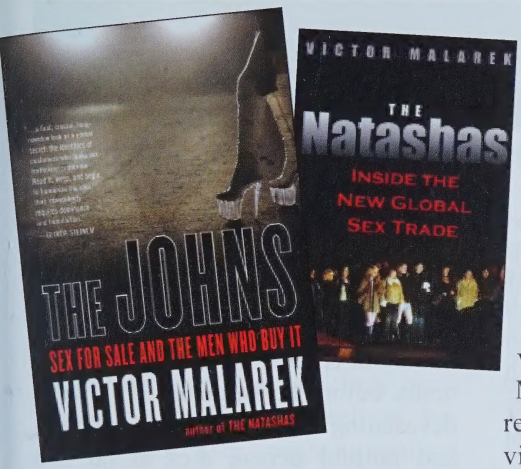
Reviewed by Laura Duggan

The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy it
by Victor Malarek

This book is a sequel to Malarek's first exposé of human trafficking *The Natashas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade*. The first book focused on the plight of the women victimized by the sex trade. This book centres more on the 'johns'—the people who buy sex from the women. Neither of these books is 'fun' to read, but the information provided by this award-winning journalist provides a solid foundation from which passionate commitment to fight against the injustice of the sex trade can grow.

Malarek's facts are devastating. The Human Trafficking trade nets US$12 billion each year; 10 million women and children are ensnared in the sex trade globally—serving between 5 and 20 'johns' per day; the average age for first exposure to on-line pornography is 11 years; sex-tourism accounts for half of all visitors to Thailand; child prostitutes are as young as 5; in North America, the average age to be coerced into prostitution is between 12 and 14.

In addition to these facts, and more unsettling, Malarek reveals the spectrum of attitudes of these 'customers'. The comments made by these men reveal more about issues of power, entitlement,



rage, and human dislocation than about sexual gratification.

It is these underlying motivations that show how our whole society has to bear responsibility for the injustice of the sex trade. Malarek has not had to hunt far to find these johns. They are our public figures, our neighbours, our colleagues, our friends, even sometimes our fathers, sons, and husbands. We can find entrenched within our society elements that, if not actively supporting such views, at least do nothing to deter them. The Internet and other media give easy access to extreme pornography, which desensitizes our youth by dehumanizing sex and devaluing relationships. Our society tolerates language which damns the victim (skank, ho) while absolving the perpetrator (client, john). Our societal preoccupation with accumulation has created economic inequities which have imperiled entire peoples —exposing them to the predators amongst us. Our sense of individual entitlement has blinded us to the disintegration of community and the isolation of so many.

While painting a disturbingly vivid picture of the reality that is, Malarek also presents some hope for redemption. For example, some individuals are educating and sensitizing johns to the harsh reality of most prostituted women. Nations such as Sweden are taking the crimes committed by their citizens seriously, no matter where in the world they are committed, placing their legal consequences on their domestic johns. These are signs of hope. May the commitment of individuals, groups, and nations, to the inherent dignity of all people, the beauty of human relationships, and the value of community, inspire each one of us to work with those who hope for rescue, redemption, and respect for all.

Reviewed by Reverend Janet Anstead, minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

This review is a condensed version of the review first printed in Riding the Waves, *June 2009, a publication of the Women's Inter-Church Council.*

WTS PCC THE Book Room

The Book Room
50 Wynford Drive,
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
416-441-1111 800-619-7301
bookroom@presbyterian.ca

Mission in Action

Glenn and Linda Inglis
Blantyre, Malawi

2009 was a difficult and demanding year. The economic meltdown which hit the industrialized world hard in 2007–2008 took a little longer to reach Malawi. So much of Africa operates outside the over-heated financial system that caused instant ruin for so many. There was a delay, but the effects came nonetheless. In January 2009, we were summoned by a major donor, Oxfam, to hear the bad news that donations were down and so our funding would be cut. This story was repeated by most donors (but not PWS&D I am happy to say!) We had to make program cuts and lay off staff without pay for a two-month period. It was painful.

The other issue which took the joy out of writing was Linda's sister's declining health. After a courageous fight against a brain tumour, Audrey died in November. We are grateful to God that Linda was able to return home and be at Audrey's bedside for eight hours before death came. It is truly devastating when such a vital, talented, and faithful person dies at far too young an age. The crisis of loss has passed, but we now struggle with the lingering grief as we have to get used to the fact that a true anchor of the family—everyone's Auntie Audrey—will not be there when we need her. We cling to the healing and peace that is restored when we remember and claim our faith—because Christ lives, we will live also. At times like this, we are most aware of the difficulties of living far from family and friends. There are many joys and struggles, big and small, which we miss.

We were able to be in BC in August to celebrate Jocelyn and Ryan's belated wedding reception. They were married here in 2007 but, as they teach in Nigeria, they never had a chance to celebrate with family and friends in Canada.

So it was a wonderful day when the whole family was together.

Typical of our unassuming son Luke, he mentioned in passing one day while we were in Vancouver that he was thinking of getting married! We rejoice in anticipation of that big event which will occur this August in Cambridge, Ontario. His fiancé, Carly, is vibrant and beautiful and we are so happy for them. And our 'little one', Naomi, is happy and well in her beloved Vancouver, caught up totally it seems, in the fun and excitement of the Winter Olympics.

We have undergone some restructuring at the Synod office. We were able to integrate the Synod's public health work into our programs—we are now the Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission (BSHDC). With this addition, we have a much wider range of program skills to offer to those we serve as well as to the partners and donors who support us. We have already picked up three new programs with integrated health and development themes, so life is looking a little rosier.

The rains came late and only intermittently to Malawi this year. While not a total disaster, there will be districts where there will be hunger. Thankfully, Malawi has stored enough maize from previous good harvests, but there is still the big issue of timely and equitable distribution of these resources. Malawi's economy is heavily dependent on three export crops—tobacco, sugar and tea. With only one rainy season, the anxiety rises for both national and personal income as the vagaries of climate change affect everyone in the region.

Linda continues to be very busy receiving, orienting, and often driving the many visitors who come to Malawi from partner churches. There is a growing interest in mission trips and so the demands are high. This year, there are two groups coming from the PCC: a Youth in Mission group in May and a Coldwater, Ontario, congregational group in July.

This is also the year of our furlough and so we hope to have 2–3 months in Canada through August to early October. It will be good to have time with people we miss so much.

We are reminded by e-mails and cards that so many people we do not know pray for us and care for us. We thank you for this support! We have certainly felt the Lord's strength and guidance in the past months and we know we are blessed by prayers of so many—as well as your continuing offerings to PWS&D and *Presbyterians Sharing*.

In Christ, Glenn & Linda Inglis

SOYNICA
Rio Abajo, Nicaragua

The northern office of SOYNICA is located in Ocotal, a small city in northern Nicaragua, near the Honduras border. The staff has expertise in nutrition, early childhood development, agriculture, and

business administration. Much of their work, including their project in Rio Abajo, focuses on Social Education.

It is estimated that almost half of all Nicaraguans live below the poverty line. SOYNICA North works directly with just over 900 campesinas (rural families) in one of the poorest areas of the country. The mountains are steep, the soil is poor, and the farmers eke out a subsistence living on small, isolated plots. SOYNICA's agricultural education focuses on increasing crop yields through environmentally friendly techniques such as crop diversification, soil and water conservation, and composting. These improvements not only increase families' nutrition level, but by creating agricultural surplus, family incomes are increased. SOYNICA has been able to help organize a local produce and handicraft market.

Rio Abajo, a small community of 88 families, was one of the areas of Nicaragua devastated by Hurricane Mitch in 1998. The narrow river valley was totally engulfed in floodwaters which swept away families, homes, crops, livestock, roads, and bridges. Eleven years later, SOYNICA is still there, working in partnership with the community to improve the living conditions of the people.

Tools and equipment available to members of this community are very basic, and agriculture is heavily labour-intensive. This is a community without electricity. There is running water, but only for irrigation. All household water is carried by pail from the wells that have been dug in the fields. When people need small amounts of water for the house or to shower, they can pump water by hand. When larger amounts are needed for irrigation, there is a lawn mower motor that runs a pump on the well.

SOYNICA sponsors a Young People's Club, which teaches youth about the benefits of family gardens and organic agriculture. There are many 'mini-gardens' in the community—gardens planted in old, bald tires—that are more easily protected and maintained. Families

have been taught how to make their own natural fertilizers and pesticides. There is a SOYNICA staff member who teaches nutrition and early childhood development to new mothers in the community.

Community members are enthusiastic supporters of crop diversification and rotation, and compost fertilization, which have resulted in significantly increased yields of onions, tomatoes, and peppers. They have also appreciated different produce, such as carrots, avocado, and papaya. One plot that has benefitted from the guidance of SOYNICA expertise started with just two banana plants, and now produces mandarins, lemons, avocados, and cashews, in addition to a good crop of bananas.

SOYNICA, supported by funding from Presbyterian World Service & Development through Canadian Foodgrains Bank, has brought bounty, confidence, and improved health to the people of Rio Abajo who, just a few years ago, had lost everything but their spirit.

Overseas Staff Birthdays

June

1 – Louise Gamble, Taiwan

26 – Ann Young

July

5 – Murray Garvin

11 – Jeremy Van Wissen-Zuniga, Guatemala

22 – Jacob Hoekstra, Malawi

Portland Place
Toronto, Ontario

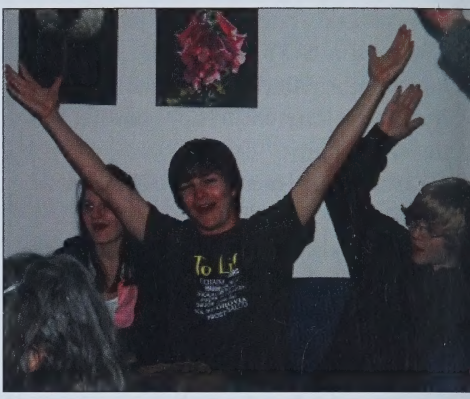
On a Saturday evening in March, a group of people from Armour Heights Presbyterian Church, led by the Youth Group members and leaders, shared an evening with residents of Portland Place. What more does a group of people need to bring them together than music and food: karaoke and pizza, to be specific. There were singers: some enthusiastic, some talented, some both. There was an audience—all enthusiastic and patient. There was music, provided by the new karaoke machine. There was dancing, and clapping, and all manner of good fun.

Portland Place is a 46-unit, not-for-profit housing project managed by a Board of Directors which reports to the Presbytery of East Toronto. Designed to provide supportive, affordable housing, Portland Place also fosters a sense of community for the residents, many of whom have experienced homelessness and isolation. Staff members at Portland Place are available to help residents with budgeting, homemaking, accessing income support programs, and conflict resolution. For the most part, residents are self-sufficient, but for many reasons they are in need of social contact and support.

A few members of Armour Heights Church have been considering how

best to reach out to Portland Place for some time. A recent meeting with Norma McClure, General Manager of Portland Place, gave them the opportunity to discern needs and opportunities. One dream of the residents was to have their own karaoke machine in the common lounge. They had been saving money toward this purchase, and had collected approximately half of what was needed. Volunteers working with Armour Heights youth realized that this was an area where the young people could provide some leadership within the congregation. Armour Heights youth were able to do some fund-raising of their own, and the machine was purchased. The rest, as they say, is history. As people were gathering to leave, one of the young people said: "We should do this every week!"

Once a week won't happen, but there are plans for Armour Heights members to return to Portland Place for a gardening day in May, and hopes for a barbecue later in the summer. Given the popularity of the recent evening, there will probably be some singing at those events too!



President's Itinerary

May 2–5	WMS Council, at Crieff Hills
May 13–24	Mission Exposure Tour, Caribou Ministries, BC
June 4–6	National Council of Women of Canada, Toronto, ON
June 6–12	General Assembly in Sydney, NS
June 14–19	WARC Pre-Council Assembly, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Forward in Faith

At the recent Council Executive meeting, I reported on the balances in the special project funds. The special projects have had tremendous support from individuals, groups, Presbyterials, and congregations. At the end of 2009, the Jobat Hostel Project had received more than $130,000, and more funds have come in since year-end. Council Executive decided to begin building so that the foundation can be laid in early Spring. Hopefully the rest of the building will be completed by the end of 2010. The hostel will be designed in much the same way as the one built by PWS&D in Amkhut:

> *"The plan shows three dormitory rooms for the boys and three for the girls, plus a dining room for each, and one kitchen. The construction area is 11,000 sq. ft. The boys' and girls' dorm rooms are separated by the bathrooms."*

The School Supplies for Eastern Europe project has also had excellent support. We collected more than $48,000 last year. We had sent $35,000 to David Pandy-Szekeres in October 2009 from this account. Again, since year-end more funding has arrived. I received an email from David just before the Council Executive and the following is a small part of what he had to say:

> *"First of all, in the name of all the students, teachers, administrators, and employees of the Reformed Church schools here in the sub-Carpathian Ukraine, I must express my grateful appreciation for the funds which the WMS forwarded to support these institutions when they found themselves in a most critical situation. Your assistance helped ensure that the schools were not only able to launch into the new school year of 2009/10 but will also be able to complete it. The money which was sent for school supplies has not yet been depleted and will continue to be used as needed. The latest necessary purchase is 120 sets of dishes—large bowls, plates, smaller bowls, and cups—for the secondary school in Nagybereg. The dishes which they had received in the 1990s from the Dutch churches have slowly chipped away and although they have been temporarily replaced by plastic ones, these do not meet the district health and sanitation services requirements. So far the school has been able to put off the purchase—lack of funds being the principle reason. Finally they can go ahead with this."*

Thank you all so very much for the continuing support of the WMS in so many ways—regular offerings, support of special projects, memorial gifts, and legacies. Your contributions help sustain our work within Canada and around the world.

Janet Brewer, Treasurer

Presbyterial

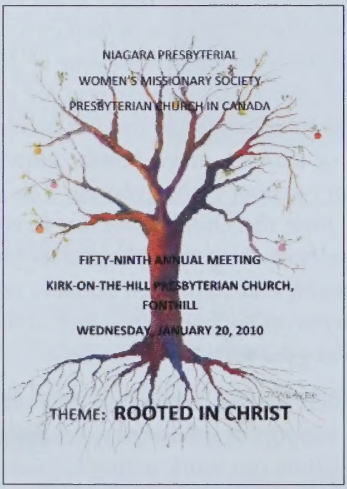
Niagara Presbyterial

The theme for Niagara Presbyterial's Fifty-Ninth Annual Meeting was "Rooted in Christ." Forty-three members and guests gathered at Kirk on the Hill, Fonthill, on Wednesday, January 20.

Our meeting was enhanced by lovely program-book covers, and a tree, upon which the officers hung their reports. Both of these were designed and executed by our "resident artist" and incoming president, Joan Weaver.

The meeting was constituted by President Christine Cummings. Jeanette Mullins welcomed members and guests on behalf of Kirk on the Hill WMS members and the ladies of Rockway and North Pelham congregations, with whom they form a combined group.

The Rev. Calvin Lewis, minister of Kirk on the Hill welcomed us on behalf of his congregation and conducted a worship and communion service. The service concluded with the singing of a new hymn: "In Haiti, There is Anguish." The lyrics were written by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette and were sung to the tune of "Beneath the Cross of Jesus." The words to this very moving hymn can be found on the PCC web site.



Stephen Allen, of Justice Ministries, gave a very interesting PowerPoint presentation on "Migrant Workers." His images and anecdotes from visits on both sides of the US/Mexican border gave insight into the many problems for all involved there, and the efforts being made by people of goodwill, especially the churches, to help resolve these issues. While much of the emphasis was on the plight of those crossing the US/Mexican border, Mr. Allen also made reference to those employed in the Leamington and Niagara areas.

Rev. Graham Kennedy, Moderator of Presbytery, brought greetings from Presbytery.

Jessie Knox, Synodical President, conveyed greetings from Council, and Bonnie Roland brought greetings from Synodical. Nancy Miller, treasurer, was pleased to report that we exceeded our objective by $2.77!

After lunch, the afternoon session started with a Hymn Sing, led by Donna Bachur, and accompanied by Margaret Rice. Anne Yee Hibbs introduced us to the

new WMS resource book for groups, which she and Linda Reid have prepared. Jessie Knox installed the new officers, using a service printed in the new resource book. After dealing with new business, our new President, Joan Weaver, closed the meeting with prayer.

Hazel McGraw

Huron-Perth Presbyterial Annual Meeting

Over 50 ladies gathered at Avonton Presbyterian Church on Feb. 8, 2010, for the annual meeting of Huron-Perth Presbyterial of the Women's Missionary Society. They were welcomed by the President, Bernice Richards, Stratford, and by Verna Strathdee, Avonton. Annual reports were given by Bernice Richards, St. Andrew's, Stratford, Ruth Laing, Mitchell, Jan MacInnes, Atwood, Ruth Hart, North Easthope, Lillian Sparling, Cromarty, and Elizabeth Stewart, Monkton. In other business, Ruth Hart recommended several books available from The Book Room. Lillian Sparling gave the nominating report, and Rev. Ann Yee-Hibbs installed the 2010 executive.

Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs also introduced the 2010 study book which explains the plight of refugees—people who are forced to flee danger in their own community. Some are displaced persons in their own country, some become permanent residents in neighbouring countries, some apply to immigrate to Canada, and some become migrant workers who travel wherever seasonal work is available. Canada receives many migrant workers each year, mostly to work on farms during the harvest season.

The afternoon program began with a sing-song led by Shirley Aitcheson, with Lois Kipfer at the piano. Monkton ladies led the devotions based on the theme, Forward in Faith. Taking part were Christine Francis, Eldeen Ward, Elizabeth Stewart, Helen Henry, Olly Ward, Phyllis Rennick, Ruth Ward, and Sally Scott . Margaret French, Jean Edmunds and Ruth Laing led the In Memoriam service for 13 deceased members in 2009.

The guest speaker, Dorothy Henderson, from Exeter, spoke on her experiences dealing with refugees and explained ways we can help them with their varied needs, such as providing household equipment or clothing, or helping with transportation for education or appointments. Many of these refugees are eager to learn the ways of Canada, including how to cook Canadian food. She stressed the need to support the Presbyterian World Service and Development Fund. She was thanked by the new president, Lois Horne of North Easthope.

Ethel Corry, Listowel, read the minutes of the previous annual meeting. It was reported that many bonnets and pneumonia vests had been sent to Jobat Hospital in India, and there was a good collection of articles for Evangel Hall in Toronto.

The Synodical meeting will be held on April 19–20 in Goderich.

Ruth Laing

East Toronto Presbyterial 95th Annual Meeting

"God Cares and God Can" was the theme for the 95th Annual Meeting of East Toronto Presbyterial, which took place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Scarborough, on February 27, 2010. Anna Cook and Katherine Allen opened with the singing of the hymn "As a fire is meant for burning." President Marjorie Ross welcomed the 30 women who didn't let a snowstorm stop them from attending. The theme for worship, "Seek, for God can be found" was based on Luke 12:22–34. Eleanor Keith read the scripture and Doris McAndless gave a reading from a book by Ralph Martin.

Priscilla Anderson introduced our guest speaker, Rev. Arlene Onuoha, who faithfully served with the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria for over 30 years. She gave a powerful message based on Isaiah's vision of God in the temple: He is so big that his hem filled the temple. God holds the vast universe in the span of his hand (a span being the distance from thumb to baby finger). Very often when we get discouraged and ask, "Who am I, that God should care?" We should remember that God sent His own Son to die for our salvation because He cares.

Arlene then went on to describe her years in Nigeria, a country almost the size of British Columbia but with a population of 154 million people. More than 10 million live just in Lagos, the capital city. She talked about some of the projects she became involved with—AIDS education, Presbyterian Urban Health Services, National Directorate of Missions (she served as Secretary and Financial Officer). Their goals were to plant a mission station in every state capital and to reach out to indigenous people. These goals gave rise to OPAC (Operation Plant a Church) and WASAY (Win a Soul a Year). Marjorie Ross thanked Arlene for her strong faith and deep commitment to the people of Nigeria, and encouraged her in her search for a call.

The business part of the meeting involved the reading of the reports. It was announced that the Synodical meeting would be held April 16–18, 2010, at St. Andrew's, Lindsay. Rev. Dr. Ron Wallace, Associate Secretary for International Ministries, will be the guest speaker. Katherine Allen gave a moving memorial service honouring those members who passed away in 2009, ending with the singing of "Be Still and Know That I Am God." Rev. Lynda Reid installed the officers for 2010, handing each a bookmark stating "All kinds of gifts are given by the Spirit to all kinds of people" (1 Cor. 12). The meeting ended with a delicious lunch prepared by the women of St. Andrew's Church.

Gladys Stover

Lindsay Presbyterial

The 128th Annual Meeting of Lindsay Presbyterial was hosted by the Woodville

Presbyterian Church ladies on January 27. On a wintery morning, we were warmly greeted with muffins and hot drinks as we registered at 9:30 a.m. Blanche Simpson welcomed everyone on behalf of the Woodville ladies. President Linda Grace constituted the meeting with prayer, and everyone repeated the WMS purpose. We then enjoyed a sing-song led by Blanche Simpson and Valerie Barton. The theme for the meeting was "True Wisdom in Practice Brings Peace" taken from James 3:17–18.

Beaverton ladies led the opening worship with a meaningful message to start our day. Following the business meeting, Linda Grace introduced our guest speaker, Marlene Cribar. Marlene was one of the group of WMS ladies who visited Malawi in 2009, in particular the Blantyre Synod area. It was most interesting to have a first-hand report of that trip, and to see the pictures that Marlene had taken when she was in Malawi. We were reminded of the work of PWS&D in that area. The phrase "little by little" is how the people of Malawi see their situation, and how things will hopefully improve for them. Linda Grace thanked Marlene for her most interesting and informative talk.

A delicious lunch was served by the Woodville ladies and enjoyed by all. The afternoon began with a rousing hymn sing, followed by the roll call and registration report with 25 members present from seven groups, plus eight visitors. All of the secretarial reports were given and accepted. New business was presented. The duty schedule for 2010 was approved, along with the objective for the General Fund of $16,000.

We will have a busy time ahead with the Synodical Annual Meeting being held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Lindsay on April 16, 17, and 18. The Summer Rally will be held at Kirkfield on May 19. The ladies of Knox, Cannington led the In Memoriam service for those ladies who had been faithful WMS members over the years. Flowers were presented in remembrance of each of these ladies.

Rev. Dr. Lynda Reid installed the officers for the coming year.

The offering was received and dedicated by the Woodville ladies.

Bolsover ladies gave the courtesies, thanking Woodville for their warm hospitality, and all who had any part in the day's success. They also gave an invitation to join them for the Spring Presbyterial Meeting on March 24, with registration at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting closed with the singing of the hymn "My Faith it is an oaken staff," and the benediction.

Mollie Wood

Brockville Presbyterial

The annual meeting took place at Knox church in Morrisburg. Margaret Reynolds welcomed representatives of nine groups. Devotions were lead by the host group, focusing on the theme: "God the Architect, the perfecter of all creation".

Mary Moorehead will be the delegate to the Council meeting at Crieff. Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario will meet at St. Paul's, Kemptville, on April 23 and 24, when we will welcome Rev. Arlene Onuoha as special guest.

Catherine Blatch took us on a realistic trip to South Korea where she visited her daughter Shona who taught English there. As she arrived in April, she was impressed by the cleanliness of the streets and beauty of the various flowering trees—Rose of Sharon, Magnolia, Azalea, Forsythia and Cherry. Older buildings and modern ones make up the architectural landscape in the Mediterranean type of weather. Street signs in English and Korean, and illustrated menus in restaurants made life easier for visitors. Foods, such as silk worms, octopus, sea cucumber, kimchi (fermented cabbage), and the tea ceremony, were all introduced to her.

Sharing some of the culture, Catherine told us about some Korean history, noting that King Sejong (1397–1450) was memorialized in the restoration of his castle. As a wise, innovative ruler, he improved the lives of his people greatly, even perfecting an alphabet for them. Currently, women in Korea wear masks to protect them from pollution from China, and a visor to protect their skin from the sun. About 29% of religious people are Christian and 23% are Buddhists. Buddhist temples are colourful and beautiful.

Rosemary Ruttley expressed our appreciation for such a graphic presentation.

Janell Moore and Leslie Claxton provided two duets. Discussion followed a video "Curing Affluenza."

Donna McIlveen conducted a memorial service and Christine Ball installed the new executive, including Catherine Blatch as new president.

Donna Wilson

London Presbyterial

The 96th Annual Meeting of the London Presbyterial WMS was held on January 21, 2010 at Elmwood Avenue Presbyterian Church, London. The theme for the day was "Together We Can Go and Tell."

President Mary Lou McKay welcomed all, and a sing-song was led by Margaret McCullough and Eva Murray. Rev Keith McKee brought greetings and information from the Presbytery of London. The roll was called, the minutes of last year's meeting were read, and group reports were given and approved. It was noted that the various groups are remaining very active in their congregations and local communities as they support mission both here and abroad. Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs, Area Educational Consultant, read the report of the nominating committee and installed the officers for 2010. She then led an interesting introduction of the 2010 Mission Study "Staying Rooted in an Uprooted World." Marian Weldon introduced available literature and books for sale. After grace, lunch, provided by the "Thrive Committee" of Elmwood Ave. Church, was enjoyed by all.

The afternoon session began with another sing-a-long. Shirley Redpath introduced the guest speakers, Cathy Reid, Pat Shaver, and Lynn Hill. These ladies shared their experiences and used a Power-Point presentation to show pictures from their mission trip to Malawi in the Fall of 2009. It was very interesting, and helped us appreciate the work being done by our Presbyterian partners in Malawi. Juanita Coventry thanked our speakers.

The In Memoriam and worship service was convened by ladies from Knox, Komoka, and St. Andrew's, North Carodoc. Marian Weldon thanked everyone for an interesting and informative annual meeting.

The WMS of Knox-St. Andrew's, Dutton, invited the group to their church for the 2011 annual meeting. Members were reminded of other upcoming dates: Synodical on April 20 and 21, in Hamilton; the retreat on May 6 at Backus-Page Museum, Tyrconnell; and Mission Day on September 20 at Knox Church, St. Thomas.

Closing remarks were given by President Mary Lou McKay, and everyone sang the hymn "Brother, sister, let me serve you." The meeting closed with the benediction.

Elaine Brown

Local

Knox, Kincardine

In 2009, we lost a long-time member of our WMS group. Jessie Robinson died in her 103rd year. In a short booklet, *Series of Happenings*, which Jessie wrote in 1999 as a millennium project, she reflected on many of her life's events that she wanted her grandchildren and grandchildren to know. She described farm life from the perspective of a child and a wife; she shared her thoughts and feelings about the birth of her daughters, and several other incidents that shaped her life.

In 1947, the school trustees invited Jessie to return to the one-room school in which she had begun her teaching career in the 1920s. At the celebration of Jessie's 100th birthday, many of her former students came to wish her well.

WMS, St. Andrew's, Arnprior, celebrated 125 years of faith and mission on October 27, 2009. The guest speaker for the meeting was Druse Bryan, President of the WMS. Pictured cutting the cake are Marion Neill, Druse Bryan, Isabel Scobie, and Margaret Hughes.

Amazingly, she could call most of them by name!

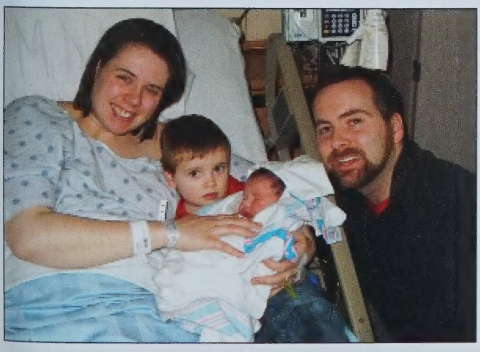
As a member of Knox, Kincardine, she was devoted to many aspects of church life, serving as choir director, superintendent of the Sunday School, and president of the WMS. Even in the last year of her life, Jessie and her daughter, Ann Pladsen, led us in devotions and presented the WMS program.

Jessie's life and work is an inspiring story of witness and service. It was a privilege to have known her; she is greatly missed.

Barbara Stuart, President

To celebrate 125 years of WMS in Knox Presbyterian Church, Woodstock, the Campbell-Afternoon Auxiliary of the WMS held a very successful Victorian Tea and Fashion Show. In a room decorated like an old-fashioned parlour, the ladies sat at tables with lace cloths, pretty tea-pots, and plates of sweets, to watch a show of women's fashions spanning the years from the early 1800s to the beginning of World War I. Members from the WMS group of Central Presbyterian Church in Brantford were among the invited guests.

Announcement



Welcome Jack Andrew Henry Browne

Tricia Browne, Resource Consultant for The Book Room, and her husband Ryan welcomed Jack Andrew Henry Browne into their family March 23, 2010. The WMS and *Glad Tidings* are pleased to share this news. Baby Jack, big brother Tristan, and the proud parents, are all doing well. CONGRATULATIONS!

WMS Certificates

Each year, the May/June issue of *Glad Tidings* includes a list of recipients of WMS certificates. We have this year's list below, but thought it might be helpful to remind, or maybe even inform, our readers about the intended purpose of the certificates, and the other possibilities for recognizing people on behalf of the WMS.

The *WMS Resource Book II* includes Certificates of Appreciation. While anyone can use these templates in any way they wish, they were included in the book to be a resource for acknowledging the contributions of a group that has made a decision to close. This is quite different from the certificates and pins that are available from the national WMS office.

The WMS offers a Certificate of Recognition that can appropriately be awarded to anyone in your community who makes a contribution to the life and witness of the congregation. Some groups choose a high school student each year. Others, recognizing the WMS commitment to education in the church, recognize an exceptional church school volunteer each year. This kind of recognition, given by a local WMS group, encourages those who serve our communities, and raises the profile of the WMS group, reminding members of the congregation that the WMS is constantly working to support the church. The minimum donation for a Certificate of Recognition is $10 for children under age 12, or $25 for youth

Memberships and Certificates 2009

Honorary Membership Certificates

Joyce MacIsaac
Agincourt, ON

Alice Gardiner
Cromarty, ON

Grace Gammie
Lucknow, ON

Carolyn Woodrow
Jarratt, Oro, ON

Noreen Bowma
Weston, ON

Certificate of Recognition

Dale McMillan
Woodville, ON

Kristen Chen
Charley Kassouf
Thornhill, ON

Pamela Farrow
Pamela Milne
Dromore, ON

Donald Miller
Barrie, ON

Enid Chunick
Loree Gillard
Alice MacAuley
White Rock, BC

Margaret Evans
Guelph, ON

Travis Bennet
Richmond Hill, ON

Congratulations to all those who have been awarded Certificates this year, and thank you to all the groups who choose to support the work of the WMS and to encourage members through this program.

or adults. It is important that groups remember to let recipients of these certificates know that a donation has been made to the mission work of the larger church, in honour of their contribution to their local community.

There are many different reasons for purchasing a Life Membership Certificate for someone. Perhaps they have served on the local executive for a number of years, or perhaps they have been a regular supporter, even though they have not been able to attend meetings. When a group decides to honour a member by presenting a Life Membership Certificate, it is making an additional contribution to the mission work of the church, in recognition of the commitment to the WMS. Reflecting the closer connection to the WMS, the minimum donation required for a Life Membership Certificate is $50.

Occasionally, there are individuals whose dedication and service to the WMS is 'above and beyond' the normal expectations. In those cases, a group may wish to purchase an Honorary Membership Certificate to recognize the contribution. Since this is, once again, a higher level of recognition, the minimum donation required for an Honorary Membership Certificate is $100.

Groups are reminded that any presentations made to acknowledge individual contributions to the work of the society are expected to be paid for by special collection, and not taken from regular donations. Donations received for certificates are considered part of the Presbyterial givings, and they are used in the general fund of the WMS. However, keeping the collection of funds for these awards separate

Life Membership

Greta Bylsma
Fran Cormack
Barb Voynovich
Calgary, AB

Hilda Echlin
Terry Walker
Dromore, ON

Marjorie Ray
Owen Sound, ON

Joan Wagner
Strathroy, ON

Jane Hutchison
Jarrett, Oro, ON

Betty Elliott
Celene Chamney
Listowel, ON

Bea Christie
Joan Marshall
Sault Ste. Marie, ON

Marlene Morgan
Judy Johnston
Esson, Oro, ON

Betty Mitchell
Doris Young
Tiverton, ON

Mary Sutherland
North Caradoc, ON

Rev. R. McMillan
Woodville, ON

Jean Niebold
Tori Smit
Guelph, ON

Joyce Davidson
Cheryl Eden
Swinton Park, ON

Morag Thompson
Kitchener, ON

Cornelia Westerbeek
Brockville, ON

May Lowry
Carleton Place, ON

Ann Wybrow
North Easthope, ON

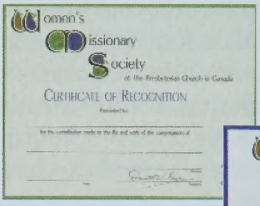
Grietje Swierenga
Smithville, ON

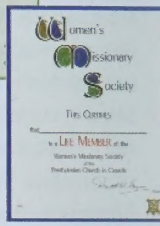
Dianna Royer
Trenton, ON

Barb Bateman
Madoc, ON

from the general donations ensures the integrity of the presentation.

Each of the certificates has a corresponding pin that gives the recipients a memento of their recognition. Certificates are purchased through Presbyterial Treasurers; pins are available through the national WMS office.





Certificates

In Memoriam Certificate — $25.00
Life Membership Certificate — $50.00
Honorary Certificate — $100.00
Recognition Certificate —Adult $25.00,
Youth $25.00, Children $10.00
Certificates are processed through the Presbyterial Treasurers.

Pins & Charms

Gold Filled Membership Pin — $65.00 (includes GST and postage)
Gold Filled Honorary Pin — $115.00 (includes GST and postage)
Certificate of Recognition Pin/Charm — $26.75 (includes GST and postage)

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

Here are a couple of things to remember:

- If you are moving, please send us your new address immediately.
- Please let us know by the end of June if your group has a new contact person for *Glad Tidings* so that we can send the summer mailing to the proper address.
- In all correspondence with our office, please include the name of your congregation and your group number.

For the sight impaired: As mentioned earlier, we are moving ahead with our conversion from cassette tapes to CDs for the audio version of *Glad Tidings*. There is no charge for the audio version of *Glad Tidings* but a contribution of $14.00 can be made, if desired, to offset production costs. If you know someone who would like the audio version of *Glad Tidings*, please contact the WMS office.

Subscriptions to *Glad Tidings* have been decreasing with the decreasing number of WMS groups. However, there are many other people who are concerned about mission work. It would be helpful if you, our current subscribers, could speak to individuals and groups within your congregation about the interesting and relevant articles in the magazine. Members of Mission and Outreach Committees, Justice Committees, and Education Committees may not be aware of *Glad Tidings*. You can help to spread the Good News!

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing the information and articles from *Glad Tidings* is a great way to remind people of the work of the WMS and the mission community that serves our church. When you have finished reading your copy, share:

- "End Slavery Now" with a member of your congregational justice or outreach committee.
- "How I spent my winter vacation" or " Touring Fair Trade" with someone who travels.
- "Come One, Come All" with any leader of women's groups in your congreation to read.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Evelyn Davies,
St. Andrew's, Barrie, ON

Millie Imrie
St. Andrew's, Bolsover, ON

Joan Barwegen
Pringle WMS
St. Andrew's, Brampton, ON

Lorna Bois
St. Andrew's, Carleton Place, ON

Lillian Douglas
Mary Elliott
Doris Miller
Cromarty, ON

Betty Marchington
Kirk on the Hill, Fonthill, ON

Alma Kilbourne
St. Andrew's, Huntsville, ON
(formerly Bonar-Parkdale, Toronto)

Doris Johnston
New St. James, London, ON

Helen Warden
St. George's, London, ON
(formerly Hamilton Road, London)

Beatrice MacEachern
St. Andrew's, Mount Forest, ON

Jean Phillips
Erskine Presbyterian
Ottawa, ON

Audrey Troup
First Presbyterian,
Port Colborne, ON

Frances Drinkwalter
Friendship Auxiliary
St. Mary's, ON

Helen Douglas
Lakeview Presbyterian
Thunder Bay, ON

C. Audrey Olesen
St. Andrew's, Trenton, ON

Mary Simpson
Lycille Wood
St. Andrew's, Wingham, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

Our past, your present, our future

National Presbyterian Museum

The National Presbyterian Museum was established through the tireless efforts of the late Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston and opened in 2002. General Assembly 2009 authorized a 3-year capital campaign to raise $300,000 for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the Museum. The interest from this trust will allow the Museum to hire our first regular part-time Curator.

Please help us preserve & promote our church's history!

To donate to this campaign on-line visit:
www.presbyterianmuseum.ca/donate

Mail donations to:
The Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston Memorial Fund
Financial Services
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive
North York, Ontario
M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301
presbyterianmuseum@presbyterian.ca

PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address

Glad Tidings

July/August 2010

Contents

Features

Call of the Cariboo

Page 4

Empowering Women in Nigeria

Arlene Onuoha and Heather Jones

Page 10

14 **A Pioneering Woman**

16 **Women: Beloved by God—WMS Council 2010**

20 **Officers and Executive Members 2010–2011**

24 **National Women's Gathering Song**

27 **Introducing Joan Smith**

Regulars

3 **From the Editor's Desk**

13 **President's Itinerary**

28 **Book Reviews**

32 **Mission in Action**

36 **In the Society**

42 **Forward in Faith**

46 **Circulation News**

47 **Pass Me Along**

47 **In Remembrance**

The education and empowerment of women throughout the world cannot fail to result in a more caring, tolerant, just, and peaceful life for all.

~ Aung San Suu Kyi,
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate,
leader of Burma's democracy movement

Glad Tidings

July/August 2010
Volume 86, No. 4

INTERIM EDITOR
HEATHER JONES
DESIGN
ALEXIS McKEOWN
CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

Published six times a year by the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to the circulation department at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Phone (416) 441-1111. Fax (416) 441-2825. E-mail Editorial gladtidings@presbyterian.ca. Circulation kallen@presbyterian.ca. Publications mail registration number 09517. ISSN: 00170720.

We anticipate receiving financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Heritage Canada Fund.

Canada

Member of the Canadian Church Press.

Subscription rate $14.00 including G.S.T. per year. Single copies $2.40. WMS members should send their subscriptions through their group *Glad Tidings* Secretary. Individual subscribers may order direct from *Glad Tidings*. Please make all money orders and cheques payable at par to *Glad Tidings*.

Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

Glad Tidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Heather Jones

From the Editor's Desk

It was a privilege and a joy to attend the recent WMS Council Meeting that was held in May. Some of the participants' comments articulated some of my own impressions.

- I learned something from every session: speakers, business, worship services and Bible study!
- Thank you for not shying away from tough issues.
- Excellent speakers! Women are powerful!
- As a new delegate, I was very impressed with the leadership and very delighted to belong to an organization of such capable women.
- If more clergy, women, and everyone, could experience a Council meeting, and learn more of what the WMS does, our enrolment wouldn't be declining!

As you will read in many of the articles in this issue, there was a strong focus on leadership at this Council meeting. There are many ways that the women of the WMS have led the church in the past, and this meeting showed that our members continue to do so. The question of what role the WMS will have in the future of our church is one that has been before us for a long time. For some, that question hangs like a dark cloud on the horizon that promises bad weather at the very least, and perhaps even total destruction. In light of the experiences of this Council meeting, and recognizing the ongoing, crucially important work that the WMS is undertaking on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, I can't share that pessimistic view.

Certainly I know that many of the members of the WMS are aging, and have less energy for meeting, discussing, and studying. I know that many of the groups that have been a stable backbone for the WMS have folded. But I also know that those 55 or 60 women, who gathered at Crieff Hills, are representative of many others in our denomination, and all of them—all of us—have been called and commissioned by God to carry out, and to carry on, the work of the church. We may change the structure, we may even someday change the name, but I am convinced that when we answer the question about the future, we won't change our purpose. We will be the Christians who respond to God's love by taking up the challenge to be in mission: to bring hope and healing, justice and peace, to the world that God loves.

Call of the Cariboo

From May 14 to 24, eight members of the WMS toured the northern interior of British Columbia, visiting much of the area served by the Cariboo Presbyterian Ministry. Sometimes they travelled by truck and sometimes by rental car. Sometimes they were escorted and sometimes they were directed. They went from homes to community buildings and from cafés to camps to meet their guides. These women covered many miles, worshipped in many places, and experienced a part of the reality of a mission and ministry that covers almost one fifth of the province.

The first stop on the tour was the Nazko community, 100 km west of the town of Quesnel, where Jon Wyminga and Shannon Bell-Wyminga work. The Nazko and Area Dakelh Outreach has grown out of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church. The Dakelh First Nation territory is in the north-eastern part of the area covered by the Cariboo ministry—an important ministry being carried out in a region that has been hard hit by the most recent downturn in the economy. The continuing struggle of cattle ranchers to make ends meet, and the ongoing crises of addictions, poverty, and despair among many First Nations have been long standing challenges for these communities. Added to these problems, the travellers saw extensive evidence of the devastation caused by the mountain pine beetle. The destruction of the forest

"After my experience here, my outlook on mission has certainly changed. Truly, seeing is believing. I've always been a supporter of missions, but now I know why."

areas was clearly visible, and heart-breaking to see. The effects on the local economies are more difficult to behold, but equally devastating. Mission staff shared many stories of the hardships being experienced in these communities because of this infestation.

The primary focus of their work is reaching out to the Southern Carrier and other First Nations people. It seeks to be Christ-centred, Biblically-based, rooted in prayer, culturally honouring, and socially transforming. The Ministry happens through house churches with First Nations style worship, an after-school Bible Class for elementary school children, a Teen Girls' Talking Circle, pastoral visiting and community involvement. The group had the chance to experience worship with the home churches and the Bible class there. They also visited the local cemetery, and heard too many stories of tragic endings of young lives.

After four days in the Nazko area, the group moved on to McLeese Lake, where they were met by David and Linda Webber to share in the inspirational Tuesday evening house-church service that included about 40 participants.

The next day, the travellers continued north to Lac La Hache, where they met up with Charles MacNeil, the fourth member of the Cariboo team, at the Red Crow Café. They visited the former United Church building which now provides office space and a place to hold the *Galilean Coffee House*, a once-a-month get-together where the Gospel is shared in another different setting. The Coffee House has become a central gathering place for people to relax and enjoy fellowship. Unfortunately, the timing of the tour didn't coincide

House church with Shannon.

with a Coffee House event. The group was able to return for the Sunday morning worship service that Charles led at this church.

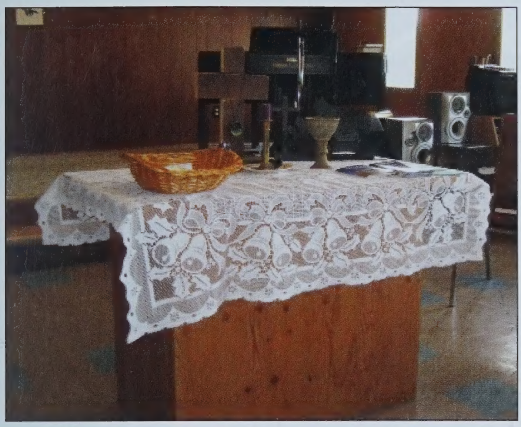
Saturday evening at Red Willow Ranch in Williams Lake gave the tour group an opportunity to hear the stories of some of the other leaders in the Cariboo Ministry. Ginny Alexander is a designated lay missionary who serves the Cariboo community in many ways. A talented musician, she often accompanies and leads the singing in worship services. She also shares in a ministry of music in the larger community, through her teaching and her work with the Cedar Crest Community Living Association in 100 Mile House. Ginny and her husband had been members of the Free Church. When those services were discontinued, the Alexanders found their way to the Red Willow House Church, met leader David Webber, and eventually discerned a call to leadership within the community.

"Much singing, with an in-depth Bible study, and Communion made for a memorable service."

Bruce Wilcox is another lay missionary in the community. He was drawn into the House Church by the informal, interactive services. Bruce has a 'day job' at a sawmill, but his ministry is focused at a local Senior Citizens' graduated care facility. His wife volunteers at two other nursing homes. Both of them have been able to connect families of residents at these facilities to the supportive communities of the House Churches.

Elaine Adams is a retired teacher who develops and delivers the *Kids' Space* Program. Children aged five through 15 gather for Bible study, crafts, games, and dinner. The program also offers support to the parents of the children. The younger children meet on two Fridays per month, and children in Grade 5 and up meet once a month. There are 47 children registered in this program, and there can be 25 to 30 attending at any given session. Other volunteers, including Elaine's husband Bill, offer support in the *Teens' Space* program and supervise teens who

After school program with Shannon and Jon.



Church service with Charles in LacLa Hache.

are selected to help with the program for the younger children.

David Webber has been working with the Cariboo Ministry for 21 years, facilitating Christian community and reaching out in a region where there are no other churches active. "Mission is where the church is not" he says. The culture of each house church is different—they began differently and they evolved differently. What is constant is a focus on Jesus, praise, worship, scripture study, and gathering around the sacraments.

The vision for this Ministry started with David and Linda Webber. It was in the 1980s, while David was in his first charge, that they began to pray and dream about taking ministry to remote communities and practising 'church' in non-traditional ways. Drawing on customs in the first century, where rural families and neighbours gathered to worship in homes, rather than in worship centres, they developed the concept of building a faith community through house churches. The Webbers felt that this vision was a call to remote rural areas to build God's community in family homes.

While ministering in their first parish, Dave and Linda waited and held tight to their passion and vision, wondering and watching to see what God was going to do. The Cariboo-Chilcoltin region was identified as a place with few churches and strong need. A proposal was written and submitted to the National Church. The response was, "It's an exciting idea, but there's no money." Undaunted, the Webbers took the proposal to the presbytery responsible for the Cariboo-Chilcoltin; the folks there recognized it as a calling of God, and approached the Synod of BC

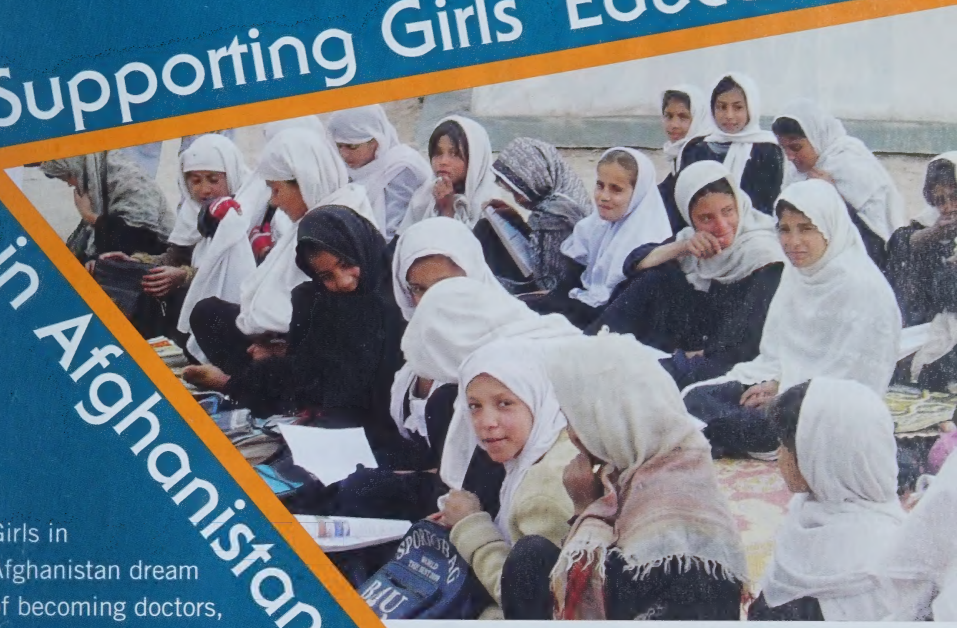
David and Linda

for support. The Synod approved the proposal, but still, there were no funds. The Webbers did get permission to approach congregations for support. Within six months, they had collected enough money to cover the expenses of the Ministry for six months. Since then, support has grown to the extent that there is now funding for four clergy stipends, and an honorarium and travel expenses for the two lay missionaries. Currently, funding for the ministry comes approximately one-third from Canada Ministries of the PCC, one-third from congregations and other donors, and one-third through offerings and fundraising within the local Ministry.

The Cariboo is a naturally beautiful area. The Cariboo Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada is an innovative and faithful witness to the power of the One who created it. Bringing faith, healing, and hope to the people of the region, the Cariboo Presbyterian Ministry is an important part of our Church's work. By providing the opportunity to meet the people who facilitate this ministry, and to experience some of the ministry first hand, the WMS has made an important contribution to this Ministry.

"Looking back on the last ten days, my most telling impression is how ignorant I was about the Ministry being carried out in the Cariboo. It is unique. Our Church is fortunate to have these dedicated missionaries working there on our behalf. Exposure trips like this one will help us to tell the story of this Ministry to the rest of the church. Maybe it will lead to more prayerful and financial support for the work."

Supporting Girls' Education in Afghanistan



Girls in Afghanistan dream of becoming doctors, teachers and engineers. Unfortunately, there are incredible obstacles that stand in the way of their dreams. Many girls from poor families have never had the chance to go to school or are forced to drop out when their families can only afford to send their sons.

Support from PWS&D is changing the situation for girls. Working with local partners, an innovative program is focused on increasing enrollment in school, training teachers, repairing damaged schools, providing textbooks and working with the local community to help members understand the importance of supporting girls. Together, we are creating new opportunities for the future.

For only $106, you can send a young girl in Afghanistan to school for one year.

Thank you for your support of PWS&D. Please visit www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Presbyterian World Service & Development
The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

1-800-619-7301 ext. 291
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd
50 Wynford Dr.,
Toronto, Ontario
M3C 1J7

EMPOWERING Women in Nigeria

by Arlene Onuoha and Heather Jones

Arlene Onuoha was first appointed to serve the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) in 1978. As one of the longest serving missionaries of the PCC in recent years, Arlene's perspective on the WMS is an interesting one. In her opening comments to the WMS Council, she shared the observation that in the WMS and even the PCC, she has heard many people speak words of fear and discouragement, but she has also seen much evidence of active, exciting ministry happening, some in new and different ways. She offered delegates a hopeful image from Isaiah 42 which tells us that the servant of the Lord will not blow out a flickering flame.

In order to help delegates understand the PCN's Women's Empowerment Programs, Arlene described a little bit of Nigeria's cultural history. She premised her remarks by stating that Nigeria is a country of about 150 million people made up of numerous tribes, languages, and very diverse cultures. She spoke from the perspective of someone who lived and worked in the south-east region of the country, mostly amongst the Igbo's and a few other ethnic groups.

In pre-Colonial times, the roles of men and women were more complementary than discriminatory. Women had their own rights and authorities, and age was respected, regardless of gender. In many ways the concept of the inferiority of women was brought to Nigeria by colonial settlers.

The structure of the family in Nigeria is very different from Canadian families. Apart from the obvious difference of Nigeria accepting polygamy, responsibilities and loyalties are very different. Legally, a Nigerian man may have many wives, but in some villages his responsibilities and loyalties remain more to his mother's people, his 'kindred'. The children within his marriage belong to their mother and her own kindred. In this traditional social structure, the man is then more responsible for his sister's children than his own. Although in practice, especially within the church, most men do take care of their own families, some fathers use this cultural tradition to justify having very little to do with

their biological children.

Unfortunately in the evolution of these family structures, situations often arise that cause suffering, particularly to women and children. In some villages, when a man dies, his kindred often blame his widow for the death. In this situation, widows and children can be locked out of the dead husband's property. Traditionally, the 'kindred' were authorized to take back the property that was inherited from the kindred, and the widows and orphans would return to the woman's own kindred. The tradition has been perverted to the extent that now they often take back everything, leaving widows and orphans destitute. While Arlene was in Nigeria, she was involved in the church's attempts to be more sensitive to and supportive of widows. The Church represents God, and so must be an advocate for them.

Some Nigerian history reveals awareness of the influence that women have had in some situations. In 1929,

there was an event that is known as "*The Igbo Women's War.*" It started in the town of Oloko when a Warrant Chief tried to assess a widow's property for tax purposes. The woman protested because in traditional Igbo culture women did not pay tax. Soon almost 10,000 women from the surrounding villages joined the protest against this Warrant Chief. The major tactic of their protest was something they called "sitting on the Warrant Chief. " They would sing and dance around his house and office, following him everywhere he went, forcing him to pay attention, until finally the Warrant Chief resigned and the issue of taxation of women was left as it had been.

More recently, in the early 1990s, the women of Abiriba organized to bring peace to their community. Clashes had arisen between the young men of two of their villages. A time for some big ceremonies was approaching, and the tension was increasing to the point that there were rumours that blood would be shed. The women gathered and after posting someone to guard all the entrances to the village they sent emissaries to the nearby cities calling their husbands and children to return "home" the following day. Then the elderly village women headed on foot to the State capital, about 50 kilometers away, in order to get the backing of the State Governor. The next day, in Abiriba the women gave the men an ultimatum—to settle the problem within two weeks or all the women in the village would go on strike during December when all the big celebrations were to take place. Being on strike would mean that no woman would cook, clean, or be intimate with their husbands during that time. The problem was quickly settled.

In many ways Nigerian women suffer because of double standards and discrimination within their culture and society. Women are usually blamed for problems such as barrenness, marriage breakups, sickness, and death. They are expected to have children, at least one being a male. They are expected to be faithful to their husbands, even though men can have multiple partners. The weight of bearing and caring for their children often falls totally on the women. Within many of the village cultures widowhood practices and treatment of widows and their children are still very oppressive.

Women in Nigeria have had to struggle to gain equal footing with men as both men and women work to interpret the current society that is greatly affected by western culture. Arlene shared many stories of hope, encouragement, and success, which have come out of the PCN's Women's Empowerment Program. This program reached women, not only within the church, but also those who worked within local government areas, helping to empower women politically, socially, economically, and in matters of health. Unfortunately, the program is limited by available funding.

Arlene has an extensive list of notable Nigerian women, including leaders of the Medical Association, the

Legal Association, and the Engineers' Association. Nigerian women have excelled in almost every field of endeavor. Within the PCN women, however, have always been a strong force. Some of their most notable early missionaries were women, like Mary Slessor from Scotland. Agnes Gollan and Joan Rochement were the first missionaries from the PCC appointed to Nigeria in the 1950s. The PCN elected women elders before the Church of Scotland, and in fact they ordained a Scottish missionary, which was a challenge for the sending church. Rev. Mgbeke Okore of the PCN was the first woman in Nigeria to be ordained as a minister. The Women's Guild of the PCN is a large, powerful part of the whole Church, involved in every aspect of Church life.

The Presbyterian Church is one part of the struggle to resist gender discrimination in Nigeria. The Ecumenical Forum For Women's Empowerment (ECOFWE), which provides micro-credit loans for small businesses and agricultural projects, Lady Ibiam Girls' Secondary School, and a project for mentally and physically challenged children, are just a few examples of organizations that Arlene, and other women of faith in Nigeria are supporting as they work toward equality for women and for all who are oppressed.

Arlene returned to Canada in 2009, and is currently doing deputation to finish her appointment with International Ministries while she seeks a call to congregational work in Canada. Her contribution to the PCN and the PCC were recognized through a minute of appreciation at the recent General Assembly. She notes that while she is happy to be settling in Canada again, her heart and her prayers are still with the people of Nigeria.

President's Itinerary
Joan Smith

August 8–11
Annual National Convention of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, Ottawa

September 17–19
134th Annual Meeting of the Atlantic Mission Society (AMS), St. John's, Newfoundland

October 20
Fall Meeting of the Synodical of Quebec & Eastern Ontario, Renfrew

Joan while on the Cariboo exposure tour.

A Pioneering Woman

Katherine Switzer was the first woman to officially run in the Boston marathon. Margaret Thatcher was the first woman to serve as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Linda Bell was the first woman to be elected Moderator of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. At the recent WMS Council meeting, Linda shared the story of her life in ministry. She told delegates to the meeting that she was grateful for the invitation because it gave her the chance to reflect on the grace that she has experienced.

Linda shared a few stories as a pioneer of women in ministry. She remembers a pastoral visit that she made to a member of her congregation. Wearing her clerical collar, she proceeded to the hospital. At the entry to the ward, a nurse stopped her, asking why she was there. Linda explained that she was the patient's minister, and was visiting at the request of the patient. The nurse, looking sceptically at the collar, asked Linda if she had a business card to verify her identity.

Revenue Canada was another sceptical witness to a woman in ministry. In the process of an audit, she was told that her Geneva preaching gown was not an eligible business expense: "Evening wear is not an allowable deduction." A picture convinced them that she was not trying to claim the cost of her party dress.

It was on April 1, 1992 that Linda received a telephone call telling her that she had been chosen to be the nominee for Moderator of the 118th General Assembly. The news of her nomination caused something of a media rush, with

phone calls for newspaper interviews and TV cameras appearing at the manse. At that time, Linda was serving the rural charge of McDonalds Corners, Elphin, and Snow Road in the Lanark and Renfrew Presbytery. One day, as she was on her way to look after her horses, a reporter showed up to take her picture to meet an imminent deadline. Given no chance to prepare herself properly, she posed in a clergy shirt and jacket. She held the dozen red roses that her congregations had presented to her to hide the barn jeans and boots that she didn't have time to change.

It was on April 18 that Linda opened a letter that had been delivered with her mail two days before. In the midst of her Easter weekend celebrations came devastating evidence of the cost of being a pioneer. Promising to be present at the opening sederunt, the writer warned her of "serious consequences" unless she removed her name from the nomination.

After prayerful consideration of the situation, and consultation with church staff, Linda decided to allow her name to be put forward, noting that: "This will happen to whoever is first." Linda continues to be grateful for the support that she received from the Clerks of Assembly and the former moderators who wrote to encourage her.

During her Moderatorial year, Linda travelled to Central America. Her experiences there continue to have impact on her life. When Canadians complain about paying taxes, Linda says she always thinks about her time in Central America, and she is happy to pay her taxes. She has seen the hardships of life where taxes are not collected and used to build infrastructure and benefit the people.

She remembers the women of Guatemala telling her that they weren't asking to be rescued. They wanted their stories to be heard, they wanted to share prayers, they were grateful for donations, but mostly, they wanted help to sell the handicrafts that they made. It was a simple request, and one that we know, from our contacts with Fair Trade outlets, is still important.

Toward the end of her year of service, a gentleman approached her to ask if there would be another woman moderator the next year. Since no women were included in the slate of nominees for Moderator of the 119th Assembly, Linda replied that there would not. The gentleman responded, "I suppose it wouldn't be a good idea to have two women in a row." Linda's comment was, "I don't know—we've had 117 men in a row, and the church has survived." Delegates to Council were pleased and amused to be reminded that we have, since then, had women Moderators of Assembly in two successive years.

Acknowledging the leadership role that she has fulfilled within our church, and recognizing the leadership offered by the WMS, Linda finished her presentation with a benediction: "God bless you. You are such a blessing to our church."

As individuals and through our congregational groups, Presbyterials, and Synodicals, the WMS offers leadership to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The WMS Annual Council meeting, with the theme "Women: Beloved of God," encouraged all of us to recognize the leadership roles that women have played, and continue to play, within the church and beyond. As we considered women who have led, we were spurred to recognize that we also lead. Through worship, study, discussion, and financial support, the WMS helps to lead our church, particularly with respect to understanding mission and doing justice in God's world. May these reports and stories from Council further encourage all of us to lead and to serve.

Look In, Shout Out

The Council meeting provided a venue for the official launch of Look In, Shout Out, the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering, to be held May 20 to 23, 2011. There is a great deal of excitement about this event. Members of the planning team made a thorough presentation of the wide range

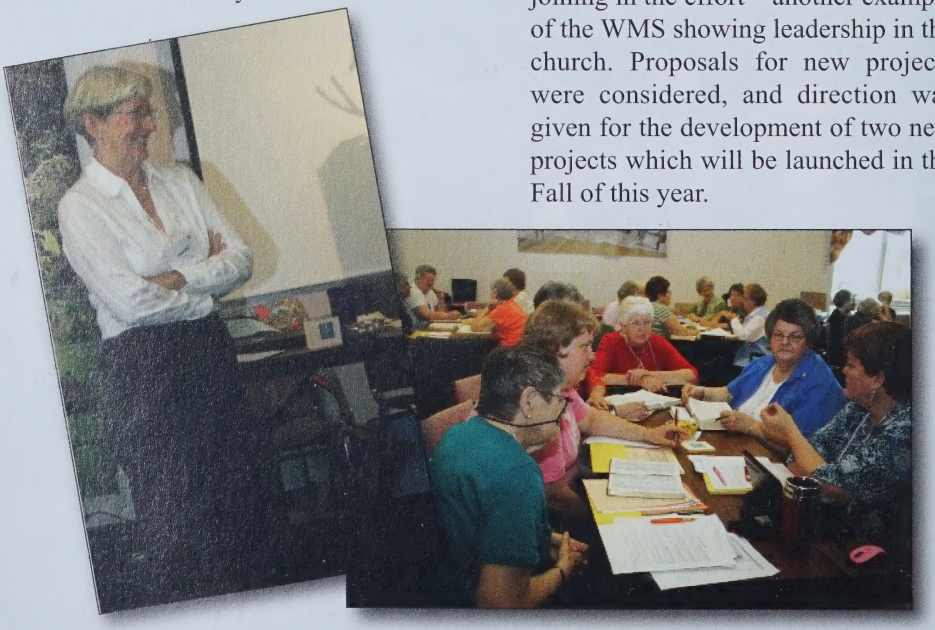
of opportunities for fellowship, study, recreation, and relaxation that will be available to the participants at this event. A few of the questions that arose related to the decision to hold the event at The Sheraton Parkway North Convention Centre, rather than at a retreat centre or the campus of a university or college. The planners pointed out that the housing costs for the event are, in fact, less expensive than any other kind of facility. The room rate for conference attendees starts at $99 per night, which covers up to four people. Even with room taxes included, participants could be paying less than $100 for their accommodation for the whole long weekend! There is also great benefit to this facility in that all of aspects of the gathering can be held in one, fully accessible building. There is no walking from residences to buildings with meeting rooms, and then to separate dining halls that has been the experience of commissioners to General Assemblies. By the end of the session, it seemed that all questions were answered and delegates came away from that session with a better understanding of the rationale for the various decisions that were made.

There were many conversations about the event, with excitement growing over the workshops, speakers, and entertainment possibilities. There are resources available to assist people with the costs of the event, including a significant discount offered for registrations received before November 15, 2010. The registration booklet, which has been sent to every WMS group, and to the Clerks of Session in all congregations, has suggestions and contact information for some sources or subsidies. The registration booklet can also be accessed through the WMS website.

Decisions

Plans for the Women's Gathering affected some of the other decisions made by this Council. Instead of the usual three-day residential meeting in May, the next WMS Council Meeting will be a business meeting held on May 19, 2011, the day before the Women's Gathering. The Bible study and mission presentations that are such an integral part of Council meetings will be provided through the Women's Gathering. It was also decided that since WMS staff will be very involved in planning the Women's Gathering, and in order to make travel subsidy monies available to participants in the Gathering, the WMS will not organize any Mission Awareness/Exposure Tours in 2011.

In other WMS business, the current 'Together We Can' projects will be closed off. More information is available about this on pages 42 and 46. These projects have been highly successful, with Sunday Schools and congregations joining in the effort—another example of the WMS showing leadership in the church. Proposals for new projects were considered, and direction was given for the development of two new projects which will be launched in the Fall of this year.



Bible Study

An important part of the Council meeting was the opportunity delegates had to deepen their awareness and knowledge of the church by listening to a wide range of presentations.

Rev. Dr. Dorcas Gordon led participants through two Bible study sessions, which gave most participants a whole new appreciation of perspective. She began her presentation by displaying an illustration shown here. There are actually two pictures here: one, a young woman wearing a hat with a feather, the other an old woman, with a prominent nose and chin. Both images are in this picture—it depends on the perspective of the person viewing the image. Scholars have pointed out that scripture is the same: interpretation of the text is dependent on perspective. Section 5.4 of *Living Faith*, our Church's statement of faith, articulates this truth.

Offering a wide range of examples from many different situations, Dr. Gordon shared stories of how different perspectives have influenced interpretations within our own denomination, and in other cultures.

In the first session, delegates were challenged to reconsider the Proverbs 31 description of a good wife in light of our own journeys of faith. The text was originally written by teachers whose task was to teach young men how to mature into responsible adult men who would maintain the status quo. If our goal—as Christians and women—is transformation of the world, then perhaps our question is: "A good WMS member, who can find?" What are the characteristics of a faithful member of our organization, which is dedicated to Jesus' mission in the world? The answer may not have been found at the Council meeting, but the question can still be a guide for all of us.

In the second session, the focus was on Mark 3:35. Background information about

Roman societal structures showed delegates just how revolutionary Jesus was in his time. In stating that "whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother," Jesus was promoting a whole new system of authority. In the rigidly hierarchical world of Rome, brothers and sisters related to one another as equals. The early Christians were counter-cultural. They tried to live in a different way. There is evidence that shows how these efforts were worn down over time. In the books of the New Testament that have been dated after the Gospels and the earliest Epistles, the radical equality of the earliest community is no longer clear.

With Jesus and the first disciples as our model, the WMS continues to encourage the church to live differently. In our time, there is a trend toward more 'personalized' faith—more emphasis on 'me and Jesus'. The WMS, with our

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS 2010–2011

Past President
Druse Bryan
68–13th St.
Roxboro, QC
H8Y 1L7

President
Joan Smith
62 Francis St.
Port Hope, ON
L1A 1K4

Secretary
Susan McLennan
538 Ingersoll Ave.
Woodstock, ON
N4S 4Y2

Treasurer
Janet Brewer
30 Thornhill Ave.
Toronto, ON
M6S 4C5

Members Without Portfolio

Lenora Arbuckle,
Box 3, 15 Queen St.
Alma, ON N0B 1A0

Carole Bilyk
772 Clifton St.
Winnipeg, MB
R3G 2X8

Catherine Blatch
PO Box 171,
25 Quabbin Rd.
Mallorytown, ON
K0E 1R0

Olive Brinson
PO Box 733
Tweed, ON K0K 3T0

Winn Files
820 Headley Dr.
London, ON N6H 3C8

Erlma Haldenby
12 Paxton St., RR 1
Holyrood, ON
N0G 2B0

Merry Lider
547 Robin Rd.
Vernon, BC V1B 3B2

Mavis McKay
406 Lakeside Green
St. Albert, AB
T9N 3T3

Marina Onclin
313–934 Heritage Way
Saskatoon, SK
S7H 5R9

Margaret Reynolds
202–7 Annette St.
Morrisburg, ON
K0C 1X0

Elaine Steele
2046 Atkinson Rd., RR
Phelpston, ON
L0L 2K0

Joan Wagner
30–375 Scott St. E.
Strathroy, ON
N7G 4G7

Joan Willsie
381 Admiral St.
Woodstock, ON
N4S 5A7

focus on reaching out to bring justice and dignity to all people, stands against that trend. We are committed to deepening our faith as individuals through study and worship, but the goal of our deepened faith is not focussed on ourselves, but on better equipping ourselves and our communities to 'go out into the world'.

The worship services that opened and closed the business each day considered different women of the bible.

Ex-officio Members (Synodical Presidents)

Bonnie Arbour
1308 Wiltshire Dr.
Sarnia, ON
N7S 4P1

Ina Borger
309 Lamont Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB
R3P 0G2

Millie Freeman
56 Michigan St.
Devon, AB
T9G 1J4

Joan Hilliard
118 Harry St.
Renfrew, ON
K7V 3C7

Carolyn Jones
22 Bridgenorth Cres.
Etobicoke, ON
M9V 2M3

Betty McLagan
#214–22015–48th Ave.
Langley, BC
V3A 8L3

Arline Sanderson
312–934 Heritage View
Saskatoon, SK
S7H 5R9

(Life & Mission Agency)
Rick Fee
General Secretary
Life and Mission Agency
50 Wynford Dr.
Toronto, ON
M3C 1J7

Board of Trustees

Carolyn Jones
Anna Cook
Joan Smith

WMS Staff

Executive Director
Sarah Kim

Program & Marketing Coordinator
Alexis McKeown
(on maternity leave)

Editor, *Glad Tidings*
Heather Jones
(Interim, until August)
Colleen Wood
(returning in September)

Manager, The Book Room
Susan Clarke

Book Room Resource Consultant
Grace Kim (until August)
Tricia Browne
(on maternity leave)

Administrative Assistant & Circulation Manager
Katherine Allen

Financial Officer (part-time)
Elza Furzer

These reflections were beautifully complimentary to our in-depth Bible study, and strengthened the focus of the meeting.

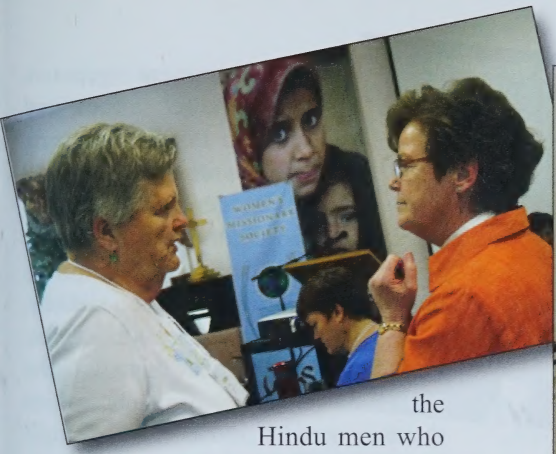
Life and Mission Agency Report

Rick Fee presented a report from the Life and Mission Agency, which included the name of this year's winner of the EH Johnson Award for work 'on the cutting edge of mission'. Rev. Dr. Terry Leblanc has been recognized for his work with and on behalf of First Nations Peoples. He is currently a minister of the United Church of Canada, serving as Executive Director of *My People International*—a holistic, training-focused ministry program with and for Native North Americans in Campbellton, NB.

From the Canadian Ecumenical scene, Rick brought news that Kairos, the coalition that has provided a common voice and coordinated actions for churches across Canada, has received a donation of $700,000 from the congregation of Deer Park United Church, which recently sold its building on St. Clair Ave. W. This money has come at a time when the financial situation for Kairos is very difficult. For many decades Kairos has been partially funded through CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). This funding was abruptly and inexplicably cut off late last year. The Kairos Board and the supporting churches are grateful for the generosity of the Deer Park congregation

Visitors From the Church of North India

Retired PCC staff Pauline Brown and Rev. Emmanuel Ariel of the Church of North India attended one session of the meeting, bringing greetings and love from the Bhil Church. Rev. Ariel is one of the Christians who was imprisoned in 2004, when one of



the Hindu men who invaded the Bhil community was killed. It is generally believed that the Hindu man was accidently killed by one of his own group. Sixteen men were imprisoned, some of them for as long as 2.5 years. Because of his status in the community, Rev. Ariel himself was released after six weeks. "In those difficult sad days, the WMS prayed for us. We will always remember you."

Rev. Ariel said that he and the other prisoners believed that God was with them in jail. It was a very difficult time, and in the beginning they were very discouraged. The jail cells were very so crowded that they had to sleep sitting up. However, twice each day they had the opportunity to have Bible study and worship. They read the Bible, prayed, and sang hymns, and they experienced God's grace and power. The Christian prisoners were able to witness to many others, since most of the other inmates in their section of the jail joined in the worship.

Several court dates were set and each time they were unable to proceed because the witnesses or other court officials would not appear. Finally the case was heard by a Muslim female judge. After studying the charges for three months, she was convinced of the prisoners' innocence. They were all acquitted.

Rev. Ariel also reported that two nurses, who had received scholarships from the WMS to further their training, are now working in the graduate school. Their additional qualifications are a significant contribution to the nursing school's ability to meet the governmental standards. It is expected that one of these students will be able to take over the position of principal when the current principal retires in two years.

Human Trafficking

Naomi Baker, of Canada Fights Human Trafficking (CFHT), was another guest who visited the Council meeting. CFHT is one of

the organizations that is working on the front lines to rescue women and children who have been coerced into joining the sex trade. The volunteers involved with CFHT work with government agencies, such as police forces and Canadian Border Services, and with other community-based agencies to rescue people under age 18 who are being held captive. They meet the victims, take them to safe homes, and provide them with the basic care and necessities that they need to survive. It was disturbing to learn that one of the first services that most of these young people need is a tattoo artist. This is because most prostitutes are tattooed by the pimp or gang that 'owns' them. If the tattoos are

National Women's Gathering Song

We are marching up to Richmond Hill,
We are marching up to Richmond Hill.
Come march with us to Richmond Hill,
We are marching to the top of the Hill.

Chorus
We are marching, marching, we are marching
(oo hoo)
We are marching in the light of God
We are marching, marching, we are marching
(oo hoo)
We are marching in the light of God

For why? There is a gathering:
A women's gathering in Richmond Hill.
Come dance with us to Richmond Hill,
We are dancing to the top of the Hill.

Chorus
Look in—SHOUT OUT!
Come and be transformed in Richmond Hi
Look in—SHOUT OUT!
Come be inspired at the gathering

There'll be singing, praying, praising God,
There'll be food and fun and fellowship.
There'll be worship, workshops, speake
too.
We're preparing all this just for you

Chorus
Come one—come all.
Come and be transformed in Richmond Hi
Come large, come small.
Come to Richmond Hill and have a ball.

not disguised, anyone familiar with the sex trade might try to 'return' the girls to their 'owners'.

The WMS annual report to General Assembly includes a recommendation requesting that the Moderator communicate the church's concern about this issue, and the need for a national strategy to combat this trade. This is just one of the ways that the WMS is working to keep this issue before the church. Hopefully we will lead the church to become a strong voice against slavery and trafficking, and in support of the victims of these crimes, both here in Canada and around the world. As one of the delegates said "It's got to start with us!"

Moderator, 135th General Assembly

The last visitor to address the Council was Rev. Harvey Self. The moderatorial emphasis for his year in office has been on chaplaincy, particularly military chaplaincy. He shared with delegates many stories of his contacts with chaplains and bases across Canada, including Dave Kettle, who has been Chaplain General of the Canadian forces for the past two years. Rev. Kettle is the first Canadian to hold this position since WWII.

Rev. Self stated that some 26,000 Canadian soldiers have been posted to

uests will come to share their culture there,
uests will be from near and wide.
splays and stories, talking too,
we march together side by side

horus
ok in—SHOUT OUT!
me and be transformed in Richmond Hill.
ok in—SHOUT OUT!
me be inspired at the gathering.

ing your money for the marketplace
buy books and pens and pins and lace
ing your swimsuit—plan to exercise
the spa to just massage your face.

Chorus
Look In—Shout Out—come and be refreshed in Richmond Hill
Look In—Shout Out—come and enjoy the Sheraton.

Next May we'll dance to Richmond Hill
This is now your formal invitation
Come dance with us to Richmond Hill
Bringing others from your congregation.

Chorus
Look in –SHOUT OUT!
Come and be transformed in Richmond Hill.
Look in –SHOUT OUT!
Come be inspired at the gathering.

Authors' proviso:
These words may be used wherever appropriate to promote the Look In Shout Out National Women's Gathering in May, 2011. The authors request that those who use this song strongly encourage someone to "dance with us to Richmond Hill," or contribute to the travel fund of the conference.
Words written by Lynda Reid and Katherine Allen.
© April 2010

Afghanistan since the beginning of operations there. He noted that since these men and women have family networks that cover virtually every community across the country, the church has the opportunity to show care everywhere.

Visiting work supported by Presbyterian World Service and Development in Ghana was another highlight of his year. Particularly inspiring was the work at GAVRU Vocational School, where disabled people are receiving the message that even though they experience isolation in many parts of their community, they are cared for, loved, and valued as children of God. Through training and provision of equipment to start their own businesses, graduates of the school are improving their own sense of self-worth, and are earning recognition and respect within their communities.

Rev. Self shared many other stories about the work of the PCC that he has been able to witness over the past year. He assured delegates that through the various ministries of our church, we can see God's word and Jesus' example bringing the hope of new beginnings to individuals and communities across our country and around the world. The closing worship service and celebration of Communion was led by Rev. Self.

As one of the last items of business for the meeting, Rev. Self installed the new WMS Council Executive. Druse Bryan has moved to the position of Past-President, and Vice-President Joan Smith is our new President. For a complete listing of the Council Executive, see page 20.

The beautiful facilities and hospitable staff of Crieff Hills Community were a terrific contribution to the Council meeting. The planning committee did

an excellent job of bringing together a fascinating slate of presenters. The worship, the singing, and the fellowship nurtured the spirits of all who participated in the meeting. WMS members everywhere share a commitment to leading our denomination in mission and service. Those who had the privilege of attending this Council meeting were enriched and inspired to continue working toward the goal of encouraging one another and all the people of the church to be involved in local and world mission. We prayed, we studied, we enjoyed fellowship, and we were sent back home to serve.

INTRODUCING JOAN SMITH

As members of the Women's Missionary Society (WMS) follow our purpose of prayer, study, service and fellowship, we spread God's message of love and peace. To me, the work of the WMS is a most rewarding and an important part of my life.

My WMS career started at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Port Hope, ON, in the early 1960s. I served first as a CGIT leader, later leading Explorers. In 1964, I became the first president of the reorganized Annie Purves WMS Group for the young women of our church. Since that time, I have served in many capacities at the different levels of WMS, and have now accepted the honour and challenge of being the president of the Society. In my new role, I am looking forward to meeting and working with the members of WMS who make up this truly great organization.

Family support has always been very important to me, beginning with my parents and six sisters. I taught school for just over 30 years. I would not have accomplished all that I have done without Charlie, my husband of 49 ½ years and best friend. From the time we met until his recent death, he was always there, no matter what I chose to do, with his love, words of support and, taking care of whatever he could to make things easier for me. We raised three wonderful children, David, Steven, and Cindy, and are blessed with 10 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

I have been an active member of my local church, involved in many aspects of the church's life, particularly with Christian education, the WMS, and Session. In the wider church, I have served on the CNOB Regional Consultative Committee, convened the task force that dealt with the visioning process for WMS, and am now the WMS representative on the Presbyterian World Service & Development Committee.

The highlights of my WMS work have included mission exposure tours to Guatemala, Eastern Europe, and the Cariboo, and representing The PCC at the Triennial Conference of the Women's Guild of Nigeria. These opportunities to experience first-hand the work being done by our church in partnership with other countries have helped me to better understand the importance of the work and witness carried out by the mission arms of our church.

Book Reviews

***The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully* by Joan Chittister**

An impulse buy at The Book Room became a wonderful introduction to a cherished guide about living out the later years of life. Joan Chittister, a member of the Benedictine sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania, has written more than 40 books on peace and justice, meditation and spirituality, and womens' issues. In this book, she encourages her readers to look upon older age as a gift—a time of reflection which can be productive, creative, challenging, and rewarding. In a series of short chapters on topics such as memories, fear, forgiveness, legacy, and adjustment, she examines both the burdens and the blessings of our mature years, which she describes as a 'spiritual adventure'.

The author attacks many of the stereotypes of ageism, providing an antidote to our Western society which often does not value the wisdom of age. From her perspective, this is the time when each one of us can achieve the fullness of what life has to offer. "A blessing of these years is being able to live so open-heartedly, and to adjust so well, that others can look to us and see what being old can bring, in terms of life, of holiness, of goodness, to make the world new again."

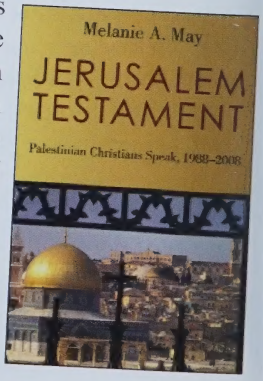
This book has a broad focus because of Chittister's sensitivity to other faith perspectives, and can be appreciated by those of any age as they consider their relationships with parents and grandparents, or their own inevitable aging. It provides an excellent starting point for study groups on a variety of aspects of growing older.

Reviewed by Carol Loudon

***Jerusalem Testament: Palestine Christians Speak* by Melanie A. May**

Much of the conflict in the Middle East is defined by religion, and involves religious bodies from many different faiths. This book considers the conflicts within Israel-Palestine through statements and press releases from the Jerusalem Heads of Churches.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." This verse from Matthew 5:9 is repeated many times throughout the statements given by the Jerusalem Heads of Churches which consists of three Patriarchs of Jerusalem: Greek Orthodox Patriarch, Latin Patriarch, and



Armenian Patriarch. The heads of other churches present in Jerusalem, such as the Syrian Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran Churches, have also signed many of the statements.

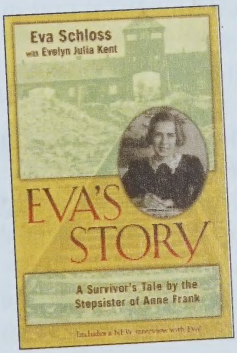
Each chapter of the book covers a time period of 3–5 years, opening with context and events from that period, and then reproducing the statements from the Heads of Churches. The context allows readers to understand some of the key events and conflicts of that time period, and the statements provide insight into the position of the church, and the voice of Palestinian Christians regarding these events.

My personal experience with Israel-Palestine and much of the literature on the conflict is that it is a very polarized issue. Most media sources, novels, and discussions have an "us vs. them" tone, and hold that stance with little discussion or acknowledgement of any other point of view. May's book is a refreshing change, stating facts and events as they occurred and providing the church statements as evidence of the claims. In setting out the background for each statement, May makes no assumptions about what the reader knows or has heard about the conflict and events in Israel-Palestine, which is another refreshing change from other literature.

Overall, I found May's book to be very informative, accurate, and easy to understand. May gives Palestinian Christians a strong voice, and she is compelling in her call for Christians around the world to be aware of our brothers and sisters living in Israel-Palestine. I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the history of Christians in Israel-Palestine and the active role of the local churches there.

Reviewed by Nicole McLellan-Cliteur

***Eva's Story: A Survivor's Tale by the Stepsister of Anne Frank* by Eva Schloss with Evelyn Julia Kent**



Many people will notice *Eva's* Story because of the connection to Anne Frank—Schloss's widowed mother married Frank's widowed father many years after Anne Frank died of typhoid in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* is classic literature that has value for more than its relevance to the treatment of Jews by Nazis in Europe during World War II.

THE Book Room
WMS PCC
The Book Room
50 Wynford Drive,
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
416-441-1111 800-619-7301
bookroom@presbyterian.ca

Eva's Story is told as she remembers it some 45 years after the events took place. The story does not have the immediacy, or the depth and breadth of appeal of Frank's book, but it is still a story worth reading. As the author says in the preface, "I became convinced that if I could move only a handful of people to care more for their fellow man, I would achieve something worthwhile and that it was my duty to try to do just that." This story can help us to care more for others.

Eva tells of the beginning of her family's torment as they became refugees, seeking asylum in Holland after the invasion of Austria. Her narrative continues through the time of her family's betrayal and arrest. Her explanation of the process of dehumanization that was at the heart of the "Final Solution" is particularly insightful and moving. She also describes the strength of the human spirit, shown through the relationships that sustained her and her fellow prisoners.

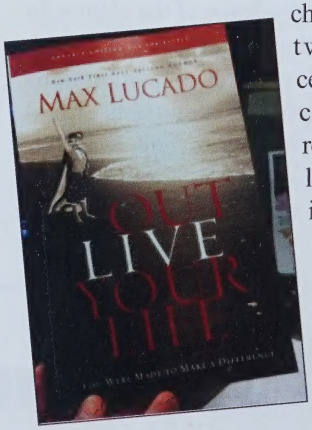
One of the most interesting parts of the book is the interview with the author that has been added at the end of the recent edition of the book. In this section, Eva speaks of her own journey of faith and the ways that other people she knew processed their experiences in the years after the war.

Reading *Eva's Story* is another experience that brings us face to face with the evil that human beings can do to one another. As our faith encourages us to be concerned about the plight of refugees still being forced to flee their homes, the ongoing violence and oppression in the Middle East, and the racism that still influences so many governments and individuals, we may wonder why we should spend time and emotional energy reading about the evils of the last century. We can only hope that hearing the stories of all victims, past and present, will help us to find the insight and the will that we need to work for peace and justice in our time.

Reviewed by Heather Jones

***Outlive Your Life: You Were Made to Make a Difference* by Max Lucado**

Best-selling author Max Lucado explores the stories of the early church in the first 12 chapters of Acts. He invites readers to answer such callings as "Do good, quietly," "Stand up for the have-nots," and "Pray first." Lucado illustrates these messages using anecdotes of how people have created change at global and local levels, in dramatic and simple ways. He suggests many parallels between the world of the first century church and our twenty-first century world, challenging readers to follow God's call in daily life.



His writing style can be wordy, but this book delivers clear and relevant

messages from the Bible for our lives. This book would be useful for a Bible study, since questions for discussion are included for each chapter. The author's royalties from this book will benefit programs for mothers and children through *World Vision* and other faith-based charities.

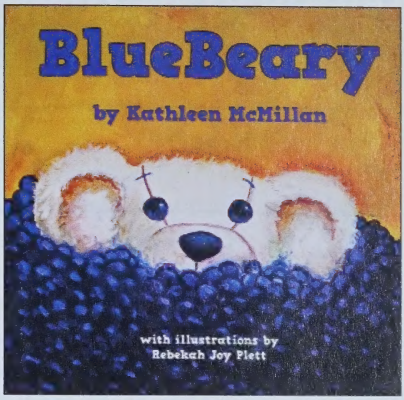
Reviewed by Judith Farris

***BlueBeary* by Kathleen McMillan**

BlueBeary is the first book in a series about Samantha and her Bear. In this book Beary is lonely when his friend Samantha begins to go to school. He remembers all the good times they had in the summer and decides to go and do some of these things on his own. In the process, Beary gets very dirty, and stuck outside. When Samantha gets home she finds her dirty bear after a frantic search. She scoops up the frightened bear, loves him, cleans him, and with her Mom's help, makes him into a new lovable bear, even though he is not his white self any more.

This is an enjoyable story for young children (ages 4–6). The illustrations are beautiful and perhaps even stronger than the story. There are many underlying messages that the author flushes out at the end of the book in "A Note to Parents and Teachers," but none of these messages are particularly clear until you read this note. The number of themes woven through the book also creates some confusion. It could be a stronger book if the author had concentrated on one theme.

What I do like about this book is the



conscious attempt to help parents promote literacy in the home. At the end of the book, the author gives parents a starting place to have what she calls "The Great Conversation." Basically, she has provided questions to ask children about the book to promote comprehension and critical thinking. Readers are also directed to a website for more activities and information. I love the idea of the website, but what was available there when I visited was not much more than was in the book. The website may be a 'work in progress', so you may find more resources when you visit.

When I picked up this book, I had the impression that it would be a book that could be used in Sunday School, since it was a finalist for a Christian Book award. However, except for the dedication, the book did not speak about faith, and I did not find the themes to be particularly Christian. It will be interesting to see if the next books in the series have more to offer.

Reviewed by Amy Fonseca

Mission in Action

Margaret Evans
Nyeri, Kenya

In my first weeks of staying here in Nyeri, Kenya, I have been aware of many stages of adjustment. Things are much different. After I had been here for about six weeks, Rick Allen, the other Presbyterian Missionary, came to visit and took me to a hotel where we had lunch. When we walked into the dining room I immediately felt out of place—but not for the reasons you would think. I felt out of place because I was surrounded by a room full of mzungus (Kiswahili term for a white person)! It was most absurd to realize that I felt out of place in a situation that used to be unquestionably normal. After just a few weeks, I was already not used to seeing mzungus. I found myself having the same reaction to the people in the room that the Kenyans had towards me when I first arrived here.

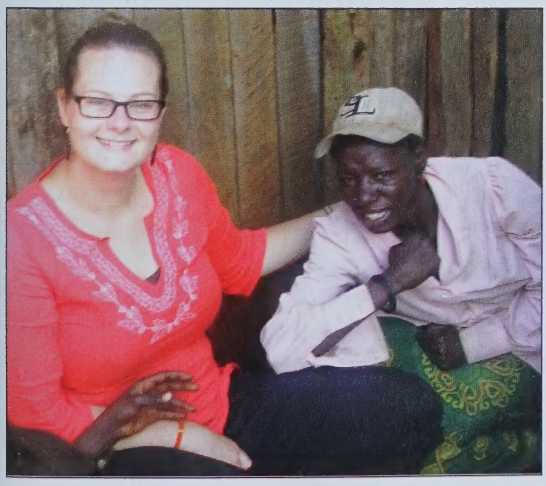
When I first came to Nyeri, I felt very out of place. It is a small town that few mzungus even visit; hardly any stay here. My first days were very uncomfortable because I was constantly being stared at and approached, often to be asked for money, but sometimes just for attention. I think I have figured out why I was so uneasy. I could deal with being stared at, since I recognized that, to them, I look very different. But I realized that my identity had changed.

I was unknown. I was no longer Margaret. To these people I was just another mzungu to stare at and ask for money; another rich person whose only value was as a potential source of a handout.

When you are in your own element, there are things that are always associated with you. For much of my life, when someone would try to describe me they would often say 'that tall girl'. Here in Africa it was a new set of associations that I had to adapt to. Not only am I referred to as the 'tall girl', I am the girl who wears glasses, funny clothes, has different hair, has dirty shoes all the time and who only speaks a few words of Swahili and Kikuyu. As

time is passing here in Nyeri, people are coming to know that my name is Margaret or Wanjiku. Now I rarely walk to or from work without someone addressing me by my name(s). They know who I am and I am getting to know who they are too. What I have really appreciated is that there is now an understanding between myself and the community that I am here as their friend. This has led to some wonderful connections and opened up the opportunity for me to become Margaret/Wanjiku to them. Now when people speak to me, we are both interested in what we can learn from each other. This is such a wonderful change.

Receiving new identities has other benefits as well. I am considered a sister to both Ndegwa and Grace (my host family), an auntie to three wonderful children in Nairobi, and a daughter to Anthony, my supervisor. The greatest lesson throughout this journey of identity has been where my true identity lies. As life changes around me I always have an identity in Christ that never changes. I never have to question that. Bwana Yesu Asufiwe!



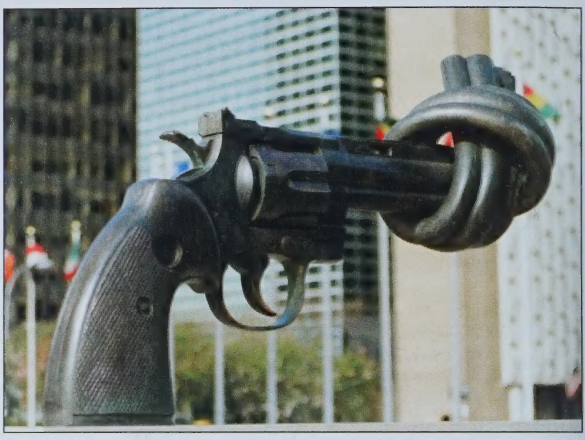
Laura Ashfield
Presbyterian Peace and Human Security Intern, Project Ploughshares, Waterloo, ON

As a recent graduate interested in peace, global human security, and international development, I was very excited to learn about the Presbyterian Peace and Human Security Internship with Project Ploughshares. As my eight-month internship comes to an end, I realize that I have learned a great deal about the importance of research and policy in creating real positive change in the world.

Project Ploughshares is an ecumenical agency of the Canadian Council of Churches. Since 1976, Ploughshares has worked to promote the scriptural mandates to be peacemakers and to seek justice and peace for the world. Ploughshares' mandate is to work with churches, as well as governments and non-governmental organizations, in Canada and abroad, to identify, develop, and advance approaches that build peace and prevent war, and to promote the peaceful resolution of political conflict.

One of the undertakings with which Project Ploughshares is involved is the effort to create and implement a Small Arms

"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore." Isaiah 2:4



Trade* Treaty. Some say that small arms are the real 'weapons of mass destruction' since they cause the most deaths and violence throughout the world. The growing availability of small arms has been a major factor in the increasing number of conflicts worldwide, and in the delay of community development after conflicts have ended. Small arms have a long-life, are low-maintenance, and are cheap and readily available. They are portable and simple to use, so they can easily be traded and transported illegally.

The Small Arms Trade Treaty would regulate and control the international flow of small arms and conventional weapons. It would establish common international standards for the transfer of arms, based on international law, human rights, and humanitarian law. An Arms Trade Treaty is needed now to stop the irresponsible transfers of arms from fuelling poverty, conflict, and human rights abuses. My role in this project was to research and summarize information for the creation of the Small Arms Trade Treaty. I read through the United Nations Security Council reports on three war-torn countries: Somalia, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Sudan. I highlighted and summarized the pertinent information and passed it on to those drafting the report. Project Ploughshares is working tirelessly to make this treaty a reality, and I'm honoured to say that I helped in a small way.

Project Ploughshares' peace building initiatives are organized under four separate themes. The program focuses on policies that (1) abolish nuclear weapons, (2) reduce the resort to military force in response to political and social conflict, (3) control the supply of arms to reduce the availability of weapons, and (4) build sustainable peace. As an intern, I worked with projects concerning the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, small arms trade, women and war, and domestic violence and guns in Canada.

Working for Project Ploughshares has been a challenging learning experience for me. I care deeply about the issues that Project Ploughshares works with, but I am more of a 'hands-on' type of person. Coming into the internship, I had no experience working with the development of policy. I knew it would be difficult for me, but facing the challenge was rewarding. I now have a solid understanding and deep appreciation of how crucially important research and policy-making are in creating change and building peace. Project Ploughshares looks at the big picture and strives to implement change through educating civil society and lobbying governments. My internship has helped me to view issues from a broader perspective. I have a deep respect for the staff at Project Ploughshares, and I'd like to thank the Presbyterian Church for the opportunity to work with such a well-respected organization.

If you'd like more information on Project Ploughshares, please visit their website at www.ploughshares.ca

**Small arms are generally defined as revolvers, pistols, rifles, many types of machine guns, and hand grenades.*

Overseas Staff Birthdays

August

9 - Paul McLean, Taiwan

13 - Ed Hoekstra, Malawi

September

16 - Denise van Wissen-Zuniga, Guatemala

Confirmation day in Sarospatak on April 18, 2010 at the Reformed Church secondary school. David Pandy-Szekeres' sons, Daniel (back row, second boy from the left) and Aron (back row, forth boy from the left) are included in the group.

Synodical

One hundred and forty three members attended the 63rd Annual Meeting of the **Synodical of South-western Ontario** on April 20 and 21 at Chedoke Presbyterian Church in Hamilton. The theme for the meeting "Welcoming the Stranger" was woven beautifully throughout the two days by speakers, hymns, meditations, and prayers. Synodical President Jessie Knox constituted the meeting, Hamilton Presbyterial President Joyce White welcomed the group, and Rev. Garfield Havemann, host minister, led a beautiful and inspiring worship service that included Holy Communion.

The guest speaker was Colleen McCue, from Presbyterian World Service and Development. Colleen gave a very informative PowerPoint presentation on the very important work of this agency of our church. Whether they are serving Africa, Central America, Eastern Europe, or Asia with local partners, or working with Action by Churches Together in Haiti, Chile, or elsewhere, PWS&D is helping to make positive changes in the global village. Colleen showed a brief, but moving video *The* Sound of One Voice. We were reminded that PWS&D needs our financial donations and our daily prayers. We thank Colleen, the rest of the staff, and the committee members who work diligently on our behalf.

Sarah Kim brought greetings on behalf of Council President Druse Bryan, and shared information about the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering scheduled for May 20 to 23, 2011.

Music was provided throughout the meeting by leader Helen Hart and accompanist Susie Strickler. After dinner on the first day, Sandra Jenvey inspired guests with her beautiful harp music.

Wednesday's program allowed participants to attend two out of three workshops, choosing from *WMS Leadership Training* with Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs, *Seniors in Motion* with Brenda Reilly, and *Welcoming Refugees Locally* with Alison Witt. The day's agenda was rounded out with worship; presentation of staff reports by AEC Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs, Youth Consultant Spencer Edwards, and Camp Kintail Director Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee; and an enjoyably dramatic invitation to the 64th Annual Synodical Meeting in Goderich presented by members of the Huron-Perth Presbyterial.

A highlight of the meeting was the installation of the executive by Dorothy Neal. Dorothy was installed as Synodical President 29 years ago. It was with love and joy that she presided at the installation of this executive, led by the new President Bonnie Arbour, Dorothy's daughter. It was a special time for

Dorothy, Bonnie, and all members of the executive as they received red carnations to mark the event.

The 63rd Annual Meeting of the **Synodical of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda** was held at St. Andrew's Church, Lindsay, Ontario, on April 16–18, 2010. The theme was "Catch the Vision" and the Bible study was based on Acts 2: 42–47. As our President, Carolyn Jones , in her President's Message put it so aptly: "So many women, past and present, have dedicated much of their time, wisdom, and vision to the work of the WMS as they live the purpose of the society."

Registered attendance for the meeting this year was 114 people. The gathering music was beautiful as the voices drifted up into the rafters of the church. The Rev. Linda Park, host minister, had a wonderful warm welcome for the very cold day. The Worship service was presented by Kingston Presbyterial. Once again, the offering was collected to support camperships to assist young people to attend various camps. Prayers for the World were presented by Algoma Presbyterial.

The business of the gathering included guest speaker Rev. Dr. Ron Wallace, Associate Secretary for International Ministries. His message, including a PowerPoint presentation, was outstanding. We learned so many wonderful and interesting facts. The Rev. Sarah Kim and her team encouraged us to attend "*Look In: Shout Out*"—the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering planned for 2011. Oak Ridge's Presbyterial invited all to attend Synodical on May 19, 2011 in Thornhill.

The meals were delicious and the hospitality gracious. The closing worship "Encouraging One Another" was presented by Oak Ridge's Presbyterial. We completed the Saturday evening events with entertainment by the Knox Ladies Quartet, directed by Janice Craig.

The annual meeting of the **Synodical of Quebec & Eastern Ontario** was held in St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Kemptville, on April 23 and 24, 2010. After registration and refreshments, the meeting opened with prayer led by Synodical president, Lois Klempa. Anita Mack led a session of gathering hymns, accompanied by Judy Messenger. A warm welcome was extended by the minister of St. Paul's, Rev. Samer Kandalaft. Greetings from the synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario were read by Donna McIlveen. A brief history of St. Paul's Church was given by Judy Messenger. Roll call was taken and the reports were received and adopted.

The theme for the meeting was 'In the church tell the story, in the world live the story.' Joan Hilliard introduced the guest speaker, Arlene Onuoha, former missionary to Nigeria, who led the worship service that evening, and spoke during Saturday's program. On Saturday afternoon, Joan Smith, President-elect of the WMS Council, spoke about her trip to Nigeria in 2008.

Participants in the meeting enjoyed a delightful evening of music with the group *Caintown*, from the Brockville Presbyterial. The Saturday morning worship was led by Anita Mack and Christine Ball, Christian Education co-ordinators for the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario. During the In Memoriam service, flowers were placed around a cross to commemorate the lives of departed WMS ladies by Lottie Sutherland and Joan Patchell of the Lanark-Renfrew Presbyterial. Courtesies were graciously extended to all by Genevieve Holding. The installation service was held for the officers of the Synodical for 2010. Joan Hilliard, the new Synodical president, closed the meeting with prayer.

Submitted by Vivian Young

Presbyterial

More than 60 members attended the **Sarnia Presbyterial** Spring Rally on Thursday, May 13 at Paterson Memorial Church. The theme for the event was *Pass It On*, which was expressed

Congratulations

Glad Tidings and Author Audrey Cameron received an Award of Merit from the Canadian Church Press for the piece "I'm Home" which appeared in the March/April 2009 issue.

The Canadian Church Press

Award Of Merit

2010

Personal Experience/First Person Account
Open

Second Place
Glad Tidings

I'm Home
Author: Audrey Cameron

through the words of the song *Pass My Love Around*.

Rev. Lorna Thompson welcomed everyone to Paterson and said grace before the noon meal. Joan Wagner reported about the book display. Since it was a rainy day, Dorothy Moss started the afternoon singing with *Showers of Blessing*. Elaine LeBlanc was the accompanist.

Our speaker for the day was Diane McKillican. She has been involved with Rayjon, an organization that works with the people of Haiti. Diane has been involved with them since 1993, and talked about her many trips to Haiti. She also told us about the great need for help since the earthquake that struck in January of this year. People have been very supportive. Supplies were collected and given to her.

Members were reminded of the upcoming lunch and boat trip on the St. Clair River on June 24, and the presentation by Rev. Emmanuel Ariel, from the Bhil area of India, on June 2 in London.

We closed the meeting by singing *Pass It On* and repeating the Mizpah benediction.

Submitted by Marilyn Rawson

This year, the **Paris Presbyterial** WMS celebrates their 125th anniversary. WMS members of five Presbyterian churches—Ayr, Glen Morris, Woodstock, Embro, and Paris—met at Knox Presbyterian Church, Woodstock, on March 10, 1885, to organize the Presbyterial.

On Saturday, February 20, 2010, 40 people gathered at Paris Presbyterian Church for the 2009 Annual meeting to celebrate our past and to look to the future. The meeting opened with a sing-song led by the Rev. Mark and Mrs. Susan McLennan, with Joan Willsie at the piano. Paris Presbyterial President, Susie Strickler, welcomed everyone. Devotions with the theme "Serve the Lord with Gladness" were led by the Simcoe WMS ladies, who also led the memorial service. Flowers were placed in memory of five WMS members, including executive member Gloria Wasacase from Brantford.

Rev. Joel Sherbino spoke about a two-week Sports Camp run by the Paris Presbyterian Church for the last three summers. The Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs led a Bible study entitled "Gifts for Ministry." The Rev. Mark McClennan agreed to fill the vacant position of vice-president. This was a historic occasion: Paris Presbyterial executive now has its first male member.

Sixty-seven women gathered at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Paisley, for the **Bruce Grey Presbyterial** Annual Meeting. After being warmly welcomed by both the President, Sandra Barker, and host minister Rev. Shelley Butterfield-Kocis, participants shared a lively hymn sing, worship, and the usual reports. It was noted that 16 bundles of knitted goods were shipped in 2009. Rev. Anne Yee Hibbs introduced the new Resource Book for WMS groups. It contains a wealth of information—a must read for most of us.

Guest Speaker Barbara Summers (centre) with incoming President Dr. Elizabeth Wilson (left) and outgoing President Sandra Barker.

The Gladys Simms Rally will take a different format this year—not only will children be included, but the whole family will be invited. It will be held on June 12 at the Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area, Paisley.

After a delicious hot lunch, and time to browse and buy books, we enjoyed an inspiring, and enthusiastic presentation of the work of PWS&D, by our guest speaker, Barbara Summers. "The Power of Us, is stronger than the Power of One. Together as a community we can impact the world." Barbara took us on a tour of many of the PWS&D projects which she had visited. Haiti has been in the news, and PWS&D has been there through ACT (Action by Churches Together). She emphasized that all work is being done through local partners, and all relief projects have a long-term component.

Water and sanitation, agriculture, and education are just some of the areas in which work is done. A new well is a cause for celebration, and gives women a sense of safety. Barbara, who grew up on a large Ontario farm, told us of how amazed she was to see so many people making a living off a tiny piece of land using organic sprays to combat disease and insects. She also spoke of women's empowerment programs, which allow women to develop their own businesses using small loans.

On Women's Day, March 8, she was impressed by the enthusiasm of the 13,000 women who came together at Maduri, India. Each woman had contributed a day's salary. In developing countries, children are thrilled to be able to go to school. In Afghanistan, they are working to get girls back in school. Barbara concluded by quoting from Romans 12 about our being one body, but having different gifts.

Anne Yee Hibbs conducted the installation of several new officers. The new President is Dr. Elizabeth Wilson. Sandra Barker was thanked for her years of serving the Presbyterial very well. We concluded with a communion service served by both Rev. Anne Yee Hibbs, and Rev. Shelley Butterfield-Kocis.

We all went away encouraged by what is being done through our relief and development agency, and desiring to continue to support this worthwhile work.

Submitted by Eleanor Crabtree

On a beautiful spring day, April 24, 2010, the 124th **Kingston Presbyterial** Annual Meeting was held at St. Andrew's Church, Kingston. The 50 members in attendance were warmly welcomed by The Reverend Lincoln Bryant. In keeping with the chosen topic: "Staying Rooted in an Uprooted World," the Scripture theme was Matthew 25:35b, "I was a Stranger and you took me in." The text provided the basis of the worship service led by Audrie Cossar, and Jean Baudoux.

In an atmosphere of faith and service to our Lord, the business meeting was conducted by President Nikki Loney, who was recognized for her faithful service over the past three years. Doreen Dath, secretary, assisted in fulfilling the agenda. The proposed objective of $17,500 for the General Fund was accepted. The Memorial service was conducted by Historian Joyce Donnan, as we gave thanks for the lives of five members whose death occurred this past year. Each gave of themselves in lives well lived.

The Reverend Doctor Lynda Reid conducted a Bible study workshop that was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Lynda, with her indomitable spirit and enthusiasm, helped us to consider the theme from the perspective of First Corinthians 12:27. Barbara Best presented a book review, and a display of books was available for browsing and buying.

The highlight of the day was the presence and presentation by our guest speaker, The Reverend Doctor Glynis Williams, Montreal. Glynis is co-author of our study guide "*Staying Rooted in an Uprooted World*." We in the

At the January 2010 meeting, the Lanark-Renfrew Presbyterial commemorated their 125th anniversary. Shown cutting the cake are Joy Randall, Wilma Welsh (guest speaker and past moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada), President Lottie Sutherland, and Past-President Vivian Young. The first Lanark-Renfrew Presbyterial meeting was held in Arnprior in 1885.

Presbyterian Church in Canada are truly blessed to have this dynamic leader in our midst. She is dedicated to the service of caring for those many people whose lives have been disrupted through wars, starvation, cruelty and other causes—many of which are unfamiliar to most of us. The group was held spell-bound by the Power-Point presentation about the problems of those who have been uprooted from their home and country.

Appreciation was expressed to Glynis on behalf of our Presbyterial and by many individuals personally. The study will be pursued with enthusiasm

Forward in Faith

The 2010 Annual WMS Council Meeting at Crieff Hills Community has now just passed and it was a wonderful event.

I am pleased to report that the two current ***Together We Can!*** projects are being wrapped up, and I am proud to tell you how generous the support has been from individuals, groups, and congregations. In total, the income to date for the India "Bricks for Jobat" is $155,472.49, and for the "School Supplies for Eastern Europe" $50,526.95. The building has started in Jobat, and the schools are operational in Eastern Europe. If you have collected designated funds for either of these projects and have not yet sent them in, please remit them to the WMS Office as soon as possible. These donations will be added to the funds already received.

We are researching the new projects suggested by the 2010 Council delegates for the next two years, and will share all the details at the projects' Kick-Off in the Fall. Details about other grants that have been approved in 2010 are available in *WMS Matters!*

Revisions to the Treasurers' Guidelines were approved at Council. Copies of the new guidelines will be distributed in the summer mailing to groups. Please ensure that all the treasurers receive a copy of these guidelines. I would be happy to discuss any suggestions or concerns you may have.

I extend an invitation to individuals, Groups, or Presbyterials: if you have any special projects that require funding assistance, please make inquiries as to what help might be available. There are memorial funds set up for a number of purposes and we are prepared to consider many possibilities. Please give us at least six weeks lead-time when submitting your application.

Janet Brewer, Treasurer

and prayers. How privileged we are in our country; we must always remember that and give thanks.

The new President, Irene Camp, closed the meeting with a blessing: "Go well and go safely."

Submitted by Jean Baudoux

On May 27, Knox Presbyterian Church, Iroquois, Ontario hosted the **Brockville Presbyterial** WMS Rally. The theme for the day was "Ready to Serve." President Catherine Blatch opened with prayer. St. Paul's, Winchester, lead the worship, based on I John 4. Jesus is our servant king who shows us how to serve and love others. Shelly Prins was an enthusiastic song leader throughout the day, sharing the history of some chosen hymns.

Rev. Doug Johns spoke about his trip to India, where he visited friends and shared in their ministry. He described his travels from Delhi, through Dehra Dun, and finally to Kerala, where his friends are based. During his two-week visit, Rev. Johns taught and preached at various places in the northern states. Smog and brown outs were constant occurrences.

On the way to India, Rev. Johns had visited Belgium. From that part of his trip, he showed scenes of Medieval churches and Begijnhof—cities of peace—which were previously enclosed by circular walls. In these cities, single and widowed women lived as a spiritual community, leaving only for daily work.

Mary Moorhead shared some highlights from Council, and also urged prayers for Bill C-268 which will, if passed, require a minimum sentence for people convicted of trafficking children. This bill is before the Senate, and hopefully will be approved before the summer recess.

For the final part of the program, we heard a panel discussion with guests Bonnie Gommert from "Food for All" food bank, and Verna Leger from Naomi House, a local shelter for women and children who have been victims of domestic abuse.

Submitted by Donna Wilson

Druse Bryan (far left) installs officers of Montreal Presbyterial Officers for 2010: Lorna Smith, Anita Mack, Mary Lou DeSilva, Linda Gerry, and Ruth-Ann Williams.

The 96th Annual Meeting of the **Montreal Presbyterial** was held at the Chinese Presbyterian Church, Montreal, on March 27, 2010. Lai Wan Tam, President of the host WMS group welcomed the visitors, and Mrs. Kim Hum shared the congregation's history with the group. Host minister Rev. Johan Ho led the devotions.

Presbyterial President Genevieve Holding constituted the meeting. Annual reports were presented, received, and adopted. Participants were saddened by the news of the closure of some groups.

The group enjoyed Peggy Wegrich's exercise break, Lois Klempa's book reviews, and the wonderful Chinese lunch. Pianist Christine Chan assisted the ladies of Côte des Neiges Church by leading a hymn sing. Linda Gerry introduced the guest speaker, Katherine Allen, Administrative Assistant and *Glad Tidings* Circulation Manager, who spoke about the Eastern Europe Mission Exposure Tour. Ruth-Ann Williams thanked the speaker.

National WMS President Druse Bryan installed the officers for the coming year. Anita Mack closed the meeting with the benediction.

Submitted by Lorna Smith

Local

Calvin Church Guild, in Abbotsford BC, held a Knitting Bee on April 8 for all knitters of pneumonia-prevention vests. Guests included friends from Calvin and from neighbouring churches. The women enjoyed time spent knitting and chatting, and a collection of finished vests, toques, booties, and Izzy dolls was on display. Tea and goodies were enjoyed by all of the guests. We also shared devotions and watched a PowerPoint presentation about Malawi and the Mulanje Hospital. In 2009, 451 items from Calvin were shipped to Malawi and India by the Westminster Presbyterial.

On March 7, the Sunday School Kids' Zone and the **WMS of First Church, North Pelham** led the Sunday service, based on the worship service included in the September/October 2009 issue of *Glad Tidings*. The Kids sang two songs, and recited the Kids' Zone Cheer:

We're the North Pelham Kids Zone team,
the greatest team you've ever seen
We come each week and hear God's word,
We sing, read stories, craft and learn.
Noah and the flood,

Jesus' birth for everyone,
water everywhere.
We must learn to take some care.
We thank you everybody here,
our church family so dear.
We celebrate with you today,
that Jesus' love is here to stay.

WMS members offered two prayers, and shared information about the group's prayer partners Rev. Ed and Jack Hoekstra, the knitting vests for babies in India and Malawi, and the Bricks for Jobat Hospital, which was the recipient of the Kid's fundraising efforts. WMS President Margaret Rice closed the service with the benediction.

Submitted by Margaret Rice

The congregation of Knox Church, Embro, ON, honoured Anne Hiscocks on the occasion of the 74th anniversary of her graduation from Ewart College. After graduation, Anne was sent to Guyana, where she met her husband, John. Despite the fact that she will be 98 years old on her next birthday, Anne continues to be an active and dedicated member of Knox. She hosts weekly Bible study and prayer meetings in her home. Appropriately, the anniversary celebration was held on Mission Awareness Sunday, April 25.

Pictured here are members of the Mary & Martha WMS, St. Andrew's Church, Strathroy, at the coffee hour after worship on April 25. The group led worship using the program prepared by Rev. Karen Horst.

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

At a recent Canadian Church Press convention, one of the workshops focused on 'Growing Your Audience'. The presenter, Judy Brunsek, talked about ways in which publications can expand readership without losing the loyalty of current readers. The advice given was to consult with the core group of people currently reading the publication, and use their suggestions as the basis for new plans. It is true that changes in technology and lifestyles are modifying some people's expectations. Many people report that they no longer have the time to sit down and read a magazine.

In August, a mailing containing a list of subscribers and other information will be sent to all group subscribers. Please consider these suggestions to help us with our renewal process:

- If your *Glad Tidings* secretary/contact person has changed recently, be sure to notify our office by mid-July so that the summer mailing is sent to the appropriate person.
- Help the *Glad Tidings* secretary/contact person by talking to subscribers about renewals, and to others about subscribing.
- During the summer, think of ways to help increase the number of subscribers within your congregation (the magazine is for everyone not just WMS members). What could happen if we set a goal to double the list of subscriptions for 2011?!

TOGETHER WE DID!

Your generous contributions have made it possible to successfully finish the Together We Can! projects for the Jobat School Hostel and School Supplies for Eastern Europe. Construction is underway in India and funds have been sent to the schools in Eastern Europe.

The totals raised:
Jobat School Hostel: $155,472.49
Eastern Europe School Supplies: $50,526.95

Our prayers have been answered through you, the people of our church. Without your support this would not have been possible. Thank you!

THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

WMS

Pass Me Along: Share the Wealth

There are many treasures in *Glad Tidings*. Let's promote mission work and the WMS by spreading these treasures:

When you have finished reading your copy, please share:

- Call of the Cariboo with your Mission and Outreach Committee members
- Information about the Women's Gathering with your relatives, friends and neighbours (Don't forget the family registration discount!)

IN REMEMBRANCE

Marion Anderson
St. Andrew's, Arnprior, ON
(formerly Stewartville WMS)

Mia Winnawsky
Agnes Munro
Edmonton-Peace River Presbyterial

Georgina Dolson
Union, Georgetown, ON

Mrs. M.W. Chalmers
Elmwood Ave, London, ON

Mary Bowman
Dorothy Lukes WMS
Knox, Midland, ON

Dorothy McGillivray
St. Andrew's, Owen Sound, ON

Margaret Park
Ruth McLean Auxiliary
St. Andrew's, Petrolia, ON

Margaret Russell
First, Port Colborne, ON

Mrs. Joyce Faiz
Gateway, Toronto, ON

Jessie Clark
St. Andrew's, Welland, ON

Violet Reaney
St. Paul's, Winchester, ON

Jean Robertson
St. Andrew's, Wingham, ON

Dorothy Howlett
Campbell Auxiliary
Knox, Woodstock, ON

Margaret Wearn
Campbell Auxiliary
Knox, Woodstock, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son...

None of us leaves this life without having given everything away – to someone, somewhere.

The only question for us is this: to whom do we want to bequeath the wealth God has entrusted to us?

God changed the world through God's planned gift. Our planned gifts can help change the world, too.
A gift annuity can provide seed money for a new youth ministry and extra income for you and your spouse as long as you live. A gift of stock given directly to the church can save lives through PWS&D's relief work while simultaneously increasing the tax benefits to you.

Contact the Planned Giving Office,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
to learn how your gifts can make a lasting difference.
1-800-619-7301, plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca
www.presbyterian.ca/plannedgiving

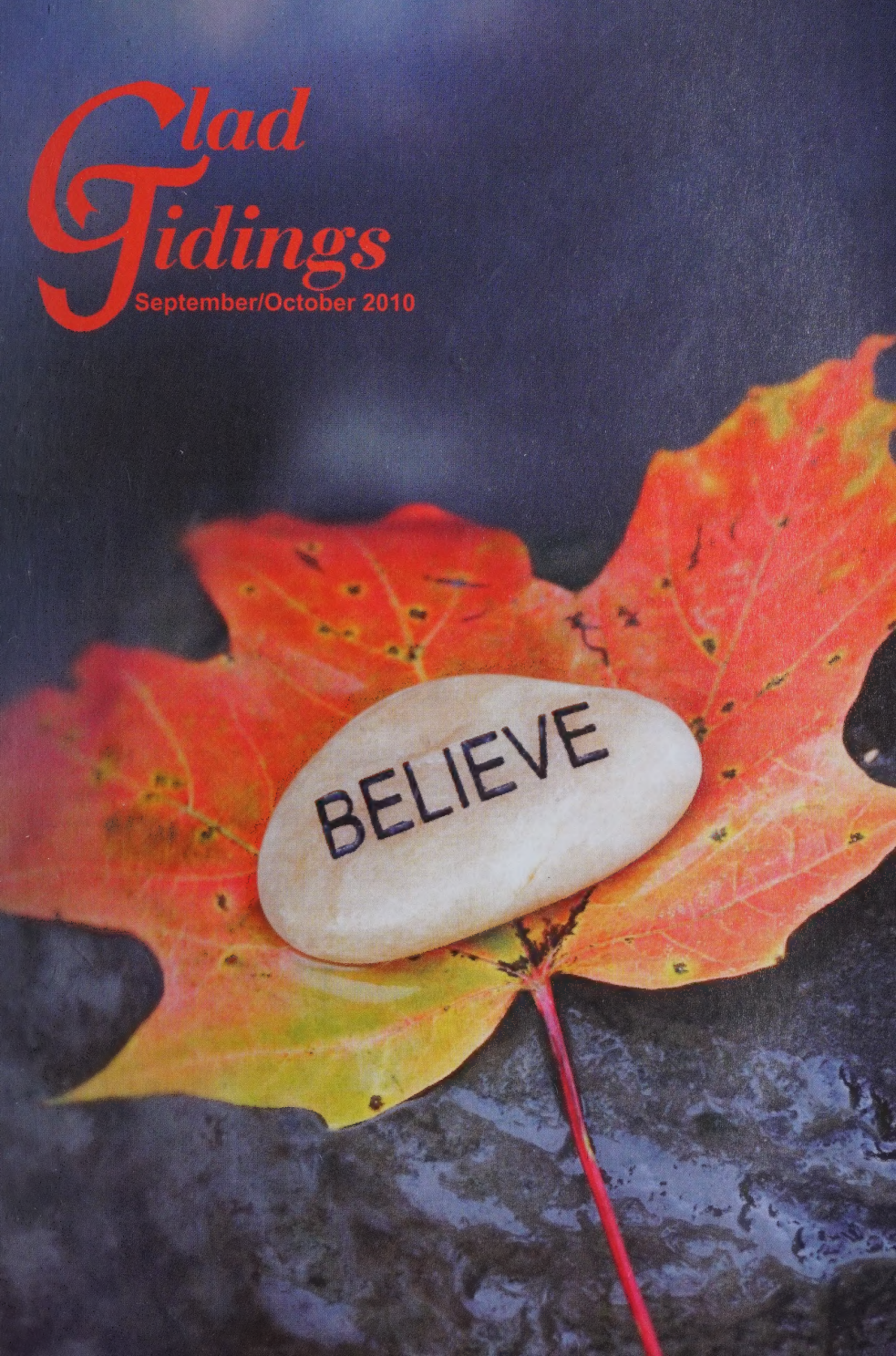
Planting seeds of hope. For generations to come.

PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address

Glad Tidings

September/October 2010



Contents

Features

Helping Women and Children in Gaza
Marjorie Ross
Page 3

Helping Detainees in Montreal
Glynis Williams and Heather Jones
Page 7

12 **Cooking Up Controversy** . . . . . *Amy MacLachlan*
16 **Haiti Update** . . . . . *Alex Macdonald*
20 **Planning to Study** . . . . . *Heather Jones*
22 **Birth of an Organization** . . . . .
24 **This We Affirm—Worship Service** . . . . .
29 **A Puzzle from the Book of Samuel** . . . . .
38 **Human Trafficking: Update** . . . . .

Regulars

30 **Book Reviews** . . . . .
34 **Mission in Action** . . . . .
36 **In the Society** . . . . .
45 **Forward in Faith** . . . . .
46 **Circulation News** . . . . .
46 **Pass Me Along** . . . . .
47 **In Memoriam** . . . . .
47 **In Remembrance** . . . . .

It has been a pleasure to serve the WMS as Interim Editor of *Glad Tidings* for the past year. I would like to thank all contributors and readers, and my colleagues in the WMS office, for supporting, guiding, and inspiring me.

Sincerely, Heather Jones

Glad Tidings

September/October 2010
Volume 86, No. 5

INTERIM EDITOR
HEATHER JONES
DESIGN
ALEXIS McKEOWN
CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

Published six times a year by the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to the circulation department at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Phone (416) 441-1111. Fax (416) 441-2825. E-mail Editorial gladtidings@presbyterian.ca. Circulation kallen@presbyterian.ca. Publications mail registration number 09517. ISSN: 00170720.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund (CPF) for our publishing activities.

Canada

Member of the Canadian Church Press.

Annual subscription rate $13.50 plus applicable taxes: ON, NB, NL $15.25, BC $15.12, NS $15.53, AB, SK, MB, QC, PE $14.18. To determine cost for single copies, please divide by the appropriate figure by 6. WMS members are asked to send subscriptions through their group *Glad Tidings* Secretary. Individual subscribers may order direct from *Glad Tidings*. Please make all cheques and money orders payable at par to *Glad Tidings*.

Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

Glad Tidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Christian Witness in Harsh Conditions

Helping Women and Children in Gaza

by Marjorie Ross

Imagine a little strip of land, blessed with a Mediterranean climate and beautiful beaches. Now imagine that this sandy strip is crammed with people—5000 per square kilometre—who exist with limited water supply, frequent electricity cuts, and a seriously inadequate sanitation system. Imagine that imports to this place are tightly controlled and nothing can be exported. Most local industries have collapsed, causing mass unemployment. Imagine that two-thirds of these people are desperately poor refugees; four out of five people rely on food aid. Imagine that leaving this area, even for a few days, is extremely difficult. You have imagined life in the Gaza Strip.

Now, imagine that you are a young mother living in Gaza. You have two small children; you know you are pregnant with another child. Your husband is unemployed; your family subsists on food rations from international aid agencies. You fear that your four-year-old, like half the preschool children in Gaza, is anemic.

What you have imagined is reality for hundreds of thousands of women who live in the Gaza Strip. In that image of hardship and anxiety, there are signs of hope. The Near East Council of Churches (NECC) operates a Family Health Clinic in the Shujaiya district of Gaza City. That pregnant mother can go to the clinic and have her pregnancy monitored. The nurses will encourage her to bring the older children to the clinic to be tested for anemia; if necessary, they will receive free medication and extra milk powder. The nurses and doctors at this clinic are Muslim, as

Together We Can

are more than 85% of the residents of Gaza, but the people who direct the clinic are Palestinian Christians, and the costs are borne by Christians and governments in Western countries. Into the reality of poverty, isolation, and fear, the message sent to people like the one you imagined a moment ago is sign of hope. The clinic, along with two other clinics in the Darraj area and the Rafah refugee camp, says to her, and to all of her neighbours, "Somewhere there are some people out there who care about me and my children!"

Where are those caring people? Some of them were at the Crieff Hills Conference Centre for the Annual Council Meeting of the WMS, where a decision was made to support some aspect of these Family Health Clinics in Gaza through one of the *Together We Can** projects for 2010–2011. We hope that many more of those caring people will be found in congregations, WMS groups, Presbyterials, and Synodicals across Canada.

Some people may be concerned that a project based in Gaza is too "controversial" or "political." While it is true that anything and everything about Israel and the Occupied Territories can be politicized, it is also true that the work of the NECC is Christian witness in a strongly Muslim community. In their Annual Report, NECC states that their work is a "Christian commitment to their society, and a source of strength for the continuation of indigenous Christian witness and presence in the region." When the clinic was destroyed in an Israeli bomb attack in January of 2009, the neighbours responded with sympathy for the Christian program; many offered space in their houses so the work could continue. NECC sees this as an indication of the trust and appreciation they have earned over many years. Strengthening this witness is a way to counteract the hatred and suspicion that many in the Muslim world feel towards the Christian West.

Support for the NECC is not support for one political group or another. It is support for women and small children. Israel, at war with Hamas, the elected government of Gaza, has imposed punishing restrictions on all residents of Gaza in order to prevent attacks by radical militants. We don't have to know all the rights and wrongs of this struggle to know that the health of babies and small children should be protected until this conflict is resolved. Canadians, and Canadian Presbyterians, have supported this witness by Palestinian Christians for more than three decades.

There are one million refugees in Gaza. The old people remember fleeing their homes in what is now Israel during the fighting when Israel was created in 1948; their children and grandchildren grew up in Gaza, but all are considered refugees. The United Nations (which created Israel) has provided schools, health services, and in some cases housing and food aid for three generations of refugees.

Soon after the United Nations programs were launched, Christian churches began to work alongside them. Indigenous Palestinian churches (mostly Orthodox) supported by Protestant mission agencies from Europe and the United States opened additional clinics and schools. A Gaza committee was formed in 1952 with the name Near East Council of Churches (NECC). Almost 60 years later, NECC still operates the three Family Health Centres described here, along with a large vocational school. All of these are funded by churches around the world through the World Council of Churches. A committee of local Christians still directs the work.

Canadian churches were not part of this early work, joining the effort some 35 years ago. In the 1970s, three Canadian churches—United, Anglican, and Presbyterian—began to fund the program of the NECC in Gaza (and similar work for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank) through the Canadian Council of Churches.

From 1985 to 2003, I represented the Canadian churches at the Partners' Meetings of the Palestinian Refugee Program, and I visited the NECC program in Gaza many times. In 2000, this partnership became part of the KAIROS program assisted by CIDA, and the Gaza program received $30,000 annually —a small contribution in terms of their total budget, but a powerful symbol of our ongoing concern. As well, visitors from the Canadian churches went to Gaza to express our support.

Late last year, CIDA funding for KAIROS was abruptly and inexplicably cut off. It may be that one factor (among others) leading to this decision was KAIROS' position on the Israel-Palestine question, seen as varying from that of our present government. Members of the KAIROS churches were shocked, and many have campaigned to have the funding reinstated. Despite the cut to KAIROS, the partnership between NECC and the Canadian churches continues. At the Council meeting, a past president expressed her concern over the KAIROS cut, and linked it to the Palestinian issue. I supported her, and said I was deeply saddened by the break in our decades of support for the refugee program, especially in light of the devastation of the January 2009 bomb attack. The clinic was able to reopen three months later, thanks to assistance from a Catholic agency, but replacing the equipment and re-building the programs is a huge task. After a substantial debate, Council supported a motion to designate some aspect of the

*Details about the actual *Together We Can* project will be circulated to congregations and WMS groups in a special Fall mailing. *Glad Tidings* subscribers are encouraged to help congregational leaders make these appeals known.

Gaza Family Health Centres as one of the new *Together We Can* projects.

Photo: Church of Sweden/ACT

Despite being located in the politically sensitive Gaza Strip, the programs of these Family Health Centres are very similar to the mother and child programs at the Jobat Christian Hospital, or in the church-based hospitals in Malawi that WMS Mission Tours have visited. The clinics monitor the health of pregnant women, and follow up after delivery with home visits to identify specific health issues, and educate and support the women, with the ultimate goal of fostering healthy children. Surveys estimate that almost 50% of Gaza's 750,000 children are anemic, 60% suffer from parasites, and increasing numbers of them are malnourished. The "well baby clinics" which saw more than 18,000 pre-school children in 2009 can detect all of these conditions, provide free medications and food supplements, and send community nurses to follow up with families. Health workers can provide family planning information on request. Recently, all staff have been trained in counselling parents and children to cope with the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

During the Council discussion about supporting this work, the question about potential controversy that might be raised was articulated: "Are we treading in dangerous waters here?" It happened that the Rev. Harvey Self, Moderator of the 134th General Assembly was present. When asked for his opinion, he responded by saying, "Maybe, but they are important waters!"

As politicians and world leaders seek resolution to the conflict in the Middle East, the NECC, supported by Christians around the world, seeks to offer hope to those who continue to eke out their daily existence in the Gaza Strip. The WMS, by choosing to support the NECC, seeks to reach out in Christian love to the people of Gaza. Isolated though they may be, they are not alone.

Dr. Marjorie Ross is well-known in the WMS. She has served the PCC in many capacities, including Associate Secretary for International Ministries, and Overseas Staff in Nigeria. Marjorie is active in Rosedale Presbyterian Church and its mission programs, and is President of East Toronto Presbyterial.

Christian Witness in Harsh Circumstances

Helping Detainees in Montreal

by Glynis Williams and Heather Jones

Most WMS groups are familiar with our Church's Study for 2010–2012, *Making Connections: Staying Rooted in An Uprooted World*. The study was intended to help our church members explore God's call to both welcome the stranger and address the underlying causes that force people to be unjustly uprooted. Following up on the study, the planning team for the WMS Council meeting invited Rev. Glynis Williams, Director of Action Réfugiés Montréal (ARM), and one of the authors of the study, to speak at the May Council meeting.

Glynis has a wide breadth of experience with refugees, gained through her work first with Tyndale-St. George's refugee program, and, since 1994, in her role as the founding Director of ARM. In 2007, Glynis spent four months in Damascus, Syria, working with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). While there, she interviewed Iraqi refugees in Syria who were being considered for resettlement to host countries willing to receive them. She shared some stories from each of these settings with the Council. Largely because of both the facts and

Together We Can

the stories that Glynis was able to share, the Council decided that one of the new *Together We Can* projects should offer support to some aspect of work with refugees in Canada. As staff and executive members worked to refine this recommendation, it was decided that the *Together We Can* project would focus on the ministry to people held at the "Immigration Holding Centre" formerly known in English as the Immigration Prevention Centre, or the Detention Centre. Even the name sends a message to those who are held there—that they are not wanted in Canada.

Our legal system may claim to be based on an assumption of innocence until guilt is proven, but those held in the three immigration detention centres across Canada could have reason to doubt the sincerity of that claim. Being detained until your identity can be proven, especially when proper forms of documentation have been lost as people have fled violence or persecution, should not feel like being imprisoned. The Holding Centres look, and feel, like prisons. In fact, when the Holding Centres reach capacity, the overflow people are taken to jails, such as the Toronto West Detention Centre. The Laval Centre in Quebec is surrounded by chain link fences topped with barbed wire. Doors are locked, and detainees are escorted by guards to the cafeteria for meals and meetings with lawyers. When being transported to hearings in other facilities, people are routinely handcuffed, and sometimes leg-cuffed. Especially for people who are seeking asylum from repressive regimes, their introduction to Canada may well have them wondering if Canada is the free and fair country they had heard about.

The third session of the study, and the Case Study of Sara and Amina, had introduced many of the Council participants to the Laval Centre. Glynis provided much more information, both about that particular Centre, and about the detainment of refugees in general. ARM is the only organization that makes weekly visits to the Immigration Holding Centre in Laval, Quebec. Their main goal is to provide accurate legal information to people and support during what can be a frightening experience. An additional role is monitoring the conditions and reasons for detention, and advocating for changes or alternatives to detention with the authorities. The agency has an agreement with the Canadian Border Services Agency that gives them permission to do this.

At any given time there are between 50 and 70 people in the Laval Detention Centre. Roughly half of these people are asylum seekers whose identity is being verified. The other half includes people such as failed refugee claimants and immigrants awaiting deportation. In her presentation, Glynis noted that those who make their claim when they arrive in Canada may not meet the Canadian government's extremely high criteria for proving the need for asylum, but that does not mean that they are not legitimate refugees. In some cases,

ARM has been able to assist these failed refugee claimants to obtain the protection that they did in fact need, but which had originally been denied to them.

ARM staff visits the centre with a team of volunteers and students to make sure people are being treated fairly, and to provide them with information, referrals, and practical assistance. The team explains the refugee claim process and ensures that detainees have access to a lawyer. Law students from McGill University and Université de Montréal participate in ARM's detention program through a law internship. Social work student interns also participate in the program.

ARM visitors pay particular attention to vulnerable people, like pregnant women and children, survivors of trauma or torture, and those detained for long periods. In 2008, ARM met 15 women in detention who were pregnant. In 2001, the Canadian Government approved new legislation which stated that children are only to be detained as a measure of last resort. In deciding whether to detain, the best interests of the child must be taken into account. However, a report published by the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), "Detention and Best Interests of the Child," shows that detention of

A Story

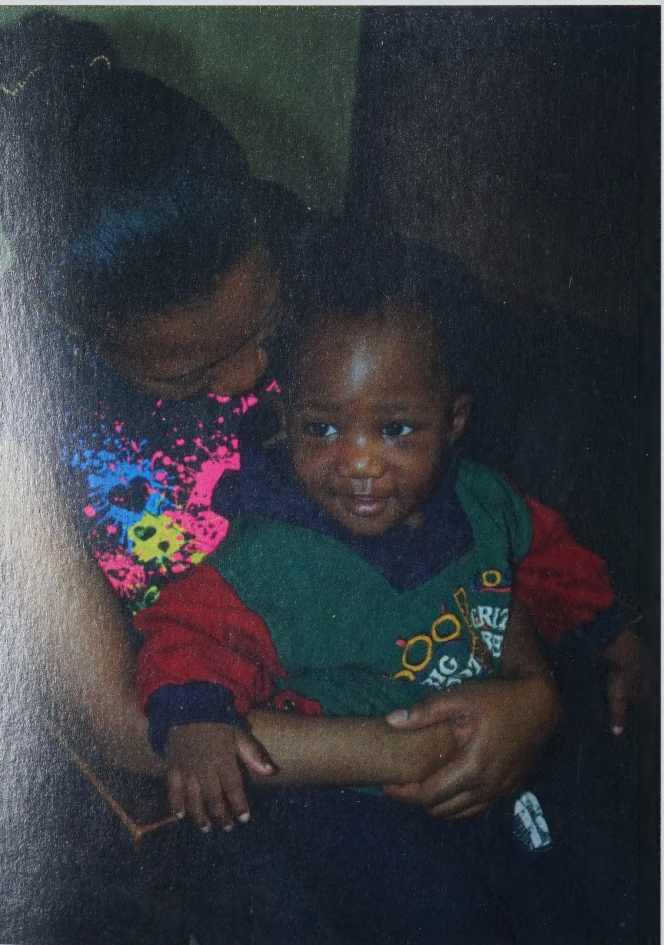
Mohsen is a refugee from Iran, who was detained immediately upon arrival in Canada because he did not have his own identity documents. As a protestor in the Iranian 2009 Presidential elections, he had been badly beaten by the security forces. After release from the Laval Detention Centre, Mohsen made this revealing comment to ARM staff: "When I saw Action Réfugiés people visiting from the outside, I immediately felt safer and less nervous, since if people from the outside were aware of our situation, nothing terrible could happen to us."

It is easy to forget that detention can be a frightening experience, even in Canada. Mohsen's words are repeated by many who wonder why they are being treated as criminals when all they have done is seek safety here. Mohsen eloquently expressed what Action Réfugiés seeks to do—to bear witness to the experiences of people detained who are refugees in our midst. No longer invisible, except in a computer database, the fears and despair of Mohsen and others are affirmed. No longer are they strangers, but fellow human beings seeking our protection.

Action Réfugiés offers legal and social services, but Mohsen's comments echo the words of Jesus, reminding us that ministry is about really seeing the "other" and welcoming them in our midst.

children is too common, and that the best interests of children are not always considered. This report can be accessed through, www.ccrweb.ca, the CCR website. Glynis and the volunteers and interns with ARM, have seen too many children who have been in detention for too long. The young woman and her son pictured here were detained for 49 days. Their refugee claim has since been accepted, and they are now integrating into Canadian life.

A woman who was detained for 49 days with her two-year-old son Akin. She has subsequently been accepted as a refugee.

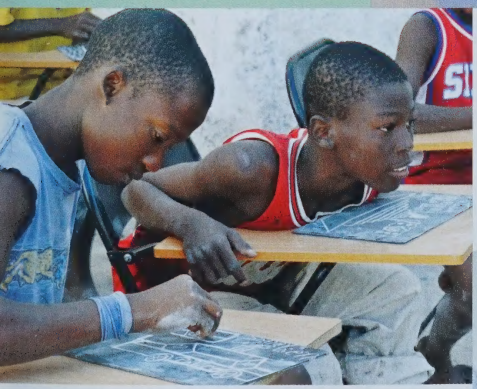


Canadian law requires that education be accessible for children in detention, but too often the system fails to provide even the basics of books and writing materials. Teachers are often not available. So, children live behind fences and locked doors with little to distract them from what can only feel like imprisonment. ARM volunteers try to address the needs of children and adults in detention by providing books and newspapers. However, the main goal is to provide people with the tools they need in order to be released from detention in a timely manner. Glynis has been heard saying that what children like Akin need is not something to play with, but to see their parent able to satisfy the requirements for release quickly.

ARM seeks justice for refugees. The focus of their program is legal advice and emotional and spiritual support. In carrying out their ministry, there are some specific needs that they are hard pressed to meet. It is hoped that support gathered through the *Together We Can* project will assist them in some very practical ways. Details about the project will be circulated to congregations and WMS groups in a special Fall mailing.

PWS&D and our partners are helping children go to school through programs that train teachers, provide food and clean water, distribute textbooks and supplies, set up after-school support and help the whole community understand the importance of keeping kids in school. Your gifts to PWS&D help ensure these important programs continue. Thank you for your generous support!

Keeping Kids in School



Presbyterian World Service & Development

The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301 ext. 291
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Cooking Up Controversy

A Conversation with Margaret Somerville

by Amy MacLachlan

While she doesn't actively cultivate a career of controversy, Dr. Margaret Somerville's track record with the media belies the truth: during a particularly prolific four-month span, the Ethicist, Samuel Gale Professor of Law, professor in the Faculty of Medicine, and founding Director of McGill University's Centre for Medicine, Law and Ethics, was mentioned by the media more than 13,000 times.

"If it's measured by how much you're in the media, then I guess I'm controversial," she says with a smile in her voice.

Somerville will be the keynote speaker at the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering to be held next May in Richmond Hill, Ontario. The event's organizers are hoping Somerville will be a big draw—and will challenge and inspire the women who attend.

As an author who regularly contributes to the *Globe and Mail*, as well as the online independent news site, The Mark (where she tackles questions on abortion, maternal health benefits, and religion and public policy), Somerville has had the luxury of voicing her oft-criticized opinions. A nomination to the Order of Canada was reportedly declined because she was "too controversial," and her Honorary Doctorate from Ryerson University was met with disdain by some, thanks to her criticism of same-sex marriage.

She admits that she didn't start out as conservative as she is now—saying her views towards same-sex marriage, male circumcision, and gay parenting were once much more liberal. "It used to be that if you were radically liberal, you were labelled as controversial. But today, and if you say anything traditional, you're regarded as controversial."

Somerville spoke with the *Presbyterian Record*'s senior writer, Amy MacLachlan, in July. Below is an excerpt from that conversation:

Presbyterian Record: Do you consider yourself controversial?

Margaret Somerville: I'm labelled as controversial. There are people who seek controversy for publicity, but I don't seek it out. Sometimes controversy comes at a pretty serious cost to myself, and there are times when I think this is too hard, that I can't do it anymore. But I try to speak with integrity and to certainly speak what I believe. I have a policy to not sign any letters or to be part of any group, but to always act as an individual. I'm not saying that being part of a group is unnecessary; it's good and people must do it. But for me, no one can say, 'Oh, she's saying that because she's a member of whatever. If I say I believe it, it's because I believe it. Not because I'm part of a group. That's not to say I won't change my mind. I will. I have changed my mind on several issues such as infant male circumcision and gay parenting. I'm less

liberal now. As I've found out more about these things, and as I've become acquainted with people who have been harmfully affected, I speak out to try to prevent those harms before they happen. We can use ethics to do that.

PR: Are people today afraid to stand up for what they believe in, especially if that position is based on faith values?

MS: They are afraid—and have reason to be—but that shouldn't be an excuse not to do so. This talk of being politically correct and tolerant of everything, well, they're tolerant unless you disagree with their viewpoint.

[Because of voicing my opinions] I've had to have bodyguards, a kidnap-proof car. It's a bit James Bondy!

I have been given a huge number of honours, and I am deeply grateful for them. I've had miles and miles more honours than I deserve. So I have felt like I have the freedom to speak, without a lot of risk to my professional life. But that's not true for a lot of young people. I've had young academics come up to me and say, 'I agree with you, but I would never, ever have said so.' They risk not getting tenure, or losing their job. It is a huge danger in our universities today.

All voices have the right to be heard, and to be heard with respect.

PR: What led you to create the Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law at McGill?

MS: It started with the growth of modern applied ethics and bio-ethics. When the first heart transplant occurred in the late 1960s [1967] by Christiaan Barnard, the world was really stunned. The heart was the symbol of life—you were alive if it was beating, and you were dead if it wasn't. For the first time, there was a live person walking around with the heart of a dead person. We were astonished with that. It was also a time when a lot of people were abandoning religion, and we were recognizing that multicultural, pluralistic societies were growing. We also saw individualism and secularism expanding. The heart transplant was one of the first incidents that everyone felt impacted by.

Ethics in medicine has a universal impact. It doesn't have the usual boundaries of rich and poor, north and south, though today that's becoming more common, and we've become more conscious of it lately. It raises very serious ethical problems, and people are talking about it now—about how to provide a standard healthcare level for all people. So the Centre was a space to explore those issues.

PR: We hear so much about how Western society is secular, but is that really the case? Does religion influence much more than we realize or want to admit?

MS: I would have said five years ago, we were in for an intense secularism, but now I'm not so sure. I think we miss religion. Maybe not religion in all its traditional forms, but the way religion functioned and what it gave us. Without religion, we lose our ability to find shared values. We have to find ways to do that. That's what religion did for us before.

I don't want to say that all faiths will join together and become one thing; they will still exist as separate strands, but I believe that our experiences of sharing a common reality will come together, so no matter where we come from, we can agree that something is moral or immoral. Maybe we won't do something for the same reason, but we should agree about what should be done. Too often we start from where we disagree, but we should start from where we agree and move towards where we disagree.

PR: Do right and wrong even exist without religion?

MS: That's an excellent question right now. It's one of the big questions today, and it is one of the big divisions in ethics. There are the moral revisionists who say there is no external compass of right and wrong. They believe there is only a personal decision of what is right and wrong, stemming from the question of does it create more good than harm? If an action creates more good, then it's right. If it creates more harm, then it's wrong. But I don't believe that. I'm a principle-based ethicist. I believe there is right and wrong that is based on a supernatural reality. Out of that reality comes a natural law and natural morality. There is a truth quite apart from any we can construct.

To learn more from Margaret Somerville, visit www.themarknews.com, or contact The Book Room for her publications.

Amy MacLachlan is senior writer at the Presbyterian Record.

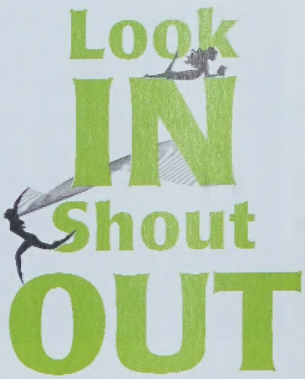
DATE: MAY 20 – 23, 2011

PLACE: Sheraton Parkway Hotel
Richmond Hill (GTA), Ontario

REGISTRATION FEES:
$325 before November 15, 2010
$425 before March 31, 2011
Family Rate: $50 off per person (18 years and over)

INQUIRIES:
skim@presbyterian.ca
(416) 441-1111 OR 1-800-619-7301 Extension 321

For more information visit: www.womensgathering.ca



Haiti Update

by Alex Macdonald

Everyone in Haiti knows the precise time when the earthquake struck: January 12, 4:53 p.m. It is like a border that separates one country from another, or one reality from another. Maybe a better analogy is a moment that changes everything—like the destruction of the Berlin Wall, symbolizing the end of the communist era. Virtually every person I spoke with during a recent visit to Haiti made reference to the moment the earth shook, and the effects those 40 seconds of terror had on their lives and country. Probably the most dramatic of these conversations was the one that I had with Alex, an aid worker with the ACT Alliance, who, at 4:52 p.m. was in his office writing a report, when his entire world changed. "I am five months old," he said. "I died that day. There is no way that I should have lived. I was sitting at my desk when everything started to shake. I looked up and the concrete wall in front of me split in half. I folded my arms on my chest and awaited my death."

As the program coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean with Presbyterian World Service & Development, I met Alex while in Haiti as part of a monitoring team of the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance.

My job was to help determine the progress of relief efforts to date, and to discuss with our partners and affected people what the next steps in rehabilitating the country should be. The ACT Alliance has been working actively in Haiti for more than 30 years. Because of this long-term relationship, PWS&D and the other supporting church agencies have been part of the immediate response to the needs of the people most affected by the earthquake. Our partners were there, on the ground, during the disaster and in the horrifying moments after the buildings collapsed, and for the hours and days after, when people needed to be rescued and treated for their injuries. Now, as Haitians move into what we might call "mid-term response," our partners are able to articulate the needs of their communities and to respond to those needs with the innovation, flexibility, and sensitivity that are required.

For instance, after the first days and weeks, a major challenge to overcome was the impossibility of registering people for assistance when they had lost all of their identification in the rubble. People who were able to escape collapsing buildings didn't have time to take anything with them. Birth certificates, identity cards, banking cards, and every other kind of official document were lost—buried in the debris and now soaked by the rains. People need some way to prove who they are—some way to register for assistance. One of our partners, Service Chrétien d'Haiti, set up a system to provide identification cards for those who needed them, and this is providing an invaluable service in allowing people to access aid.

In the few days after the earthquake, first response agencies were very concerned about food supply for survivors, so plans for having food shipped to Haiti were discussed. However, our partners quickly recognized that there was food available, but people didn't have the means to pay for it. Once again, our partners determined a better way: purchasing food locally and giving people cash to pay for the food that was available. It was then, and continues to be, essential that the priorities for assistance that we provide must be set by Haitians.

Photo: Alex Macdonald

Five months after the earthquake, only 10% of the rubble has been cleared. To be honest, it looks as if the earthquake could have happened the day before I arrived. Most people are still living in tents and struggling to find a means to earn income. Emotional scars are still very fresh. Many have scavenged whatever pieces of wood they could find to support tarps or scraps of plastic for temporary shelters. All public spaces, such as town squares and soccer stadiums, are filled with tent cities that house thousands of people who are enduring the rainy season under plastic sheeting provided through emergency relief efforts. The task of building housing in the city is overwhelming. Concrete slabs that formed the walls of most buildings crumbled or were smashed during the earthquake, and chunks of concrete still block roadways and cover large areas of land. Until the land is cleared, it is impossible to erect even temporary housing. Clearing the land, determining ownership, and allocating land are huge undertakings that federal and city administrators are grappling with.

The earthquake's epicentre was about 25 km west of Haiti's capital city, Port-au-Prince, in the city of Leogane. The destruction here left about 90% of all structures completely levelled. The land in this area is much flatter than it is in Port au Prince. Also, there is more open space, both of which make it somewhat easier to clear the rubble. Here, our partners are actively providing transitional housing to some of the people who lost their homes and have title to their property. Made of treated lumber, the structures are hurricane- and earthquake-resistant and will house a family for at least three years. The expectation is that pieces of these shelters will be recycled into permanent homes. Each one of these structures costs $2,500 and we hope to have 1,200 of them erected within a year. The

monitoring team was able to see the first 60 of these shelters in place, almost ready to house the families waiting to move into them.

Despite the devastation and the loss, there is a prevailing mood of hope. People are getting on with re-building their cities and their lives. Thousands of people have left the capital area, moving with surviving family members to rural areas. Our partners have learned that many of these people would prefer to stay in their new communities, but need help to get homes and farms started. Families that are hosting the displaced people are also in need of support to help deal with their additional costs.

PWS&D, as a long-time member of the ACT Alliance, continues to work with Haitians to recover from the effects of the 42 seconds on January 12, 2010, that changed their world. We are committed to supporting long-term efforts to provide transitional houses that will see them through the next several years. Once we have addressed transitional shelter needs, we will work with our partners to provide people with permanent housing. We will continue to support people living with disabilities to allow them to start, or re-start, their businesses. We will continue to invest in the rural areas, allowing people who left the cities to regain their livelihoods. And we will continue to walk with Haitians to solve the most complex challenges they are facing, overcome emotional scars, and find permanent solutions.

Alex Macdonald is a member of the PWS&D staff, responsible for Latin America and the Caribbean. He was in Haiti from June 6 to June 13, 2010. He can be contacted by calling the PCC national office, or at amacdonald@presbyterian.ca.

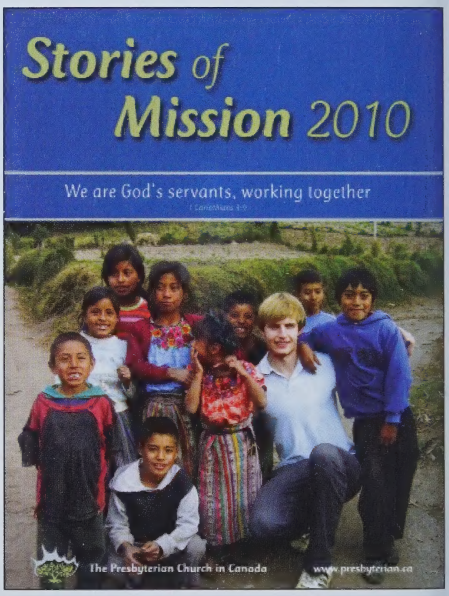
Photo: Paul Jeffrey, ACT Alliance

Planning to Study

The WMS Purpose commissions all of us to "be involved in local and world mission through prayer, study, service, and fellowship. WMS meetings have always had an emphasis on study. Learning in faith and growing in commitment to mission and to God's justice is central to who and what we are as WMS members, but that doesn't mean that we find planning the study portions of our meetings easy! Here are some ideas to help groups fulfill our commission.

Stories of Mission 2010

The new collection of stories and reports from people participating in the missions and ministries supported by the Presbyterian Church in Canada will be circulated to WMS groups with the Summer mailing, and to all congregations with the mailing of resources for Presbyterians Sharing Sunday. New this year is the section "Using *Stories of Mission* in your congregation," which includes outlines for three study sessions. Since the resource contains almost 60 different stories, and since two of the outlines are designed to use a few of the stories chosen by the leader, it would be very easy to re-use those program outlines a few times over the course of the program year.



Refugee Study

Many groups made good use of the study *Staying Rooted in an Uprooted World*, and/or the *Partners Study Welcoming Refugee Friends to Canada*. There are many ways to extend your group's study of this issue.

- KAIROS Canada has a resource kit *God's People—A People on the Move*, which can be ordered from KAIROS, or downloaded from their website: www.kairoscanada.org.
- The Book Room has a large selection of books that can deepen your understanding of refugees. If two or three group members each read one book, they could summarize the content for the group, and perhaps find one or two passages that the group could read together and discuss.

- Many people living in Canada were refugees at some point in their lives, or are related to people who had to flee their homeland. Talk to people in your community until you find someone who has a refugee story, then invite that person to share their story at a meeting of your group. If there are English as a Second (or Foreign) Language classes taught anywhere in your community, there is a good chance that someone there will be able to help you find a visitor.

Human Trafficking

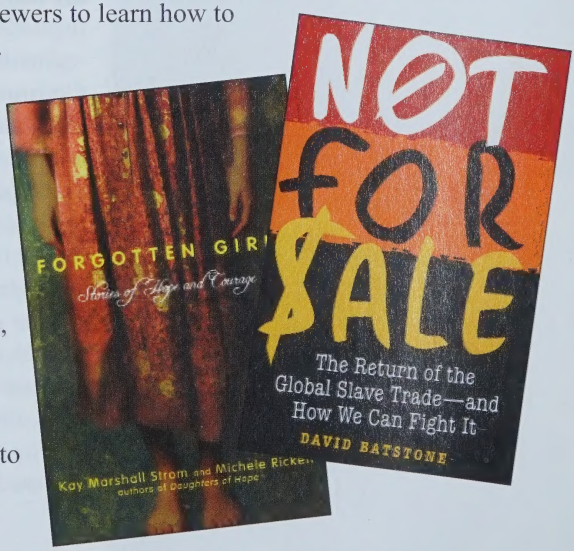
The WMS continues to be concerned about this issue. You may wish to review the suggestions for study and action that were included in the January/February 2010 issue of *Glad Tidings*. There are many other resources available to help your group understand the issue, and learn how to be involved in the fight against this injustice. You could follow the example of one of our readers who wrote:

> The article "End Slavery Now" was especially interesting. I found the Book Review for Victor Malarek's exposé on *The Johns* very revealing. I ordered and have read his two books: utterly devastating.

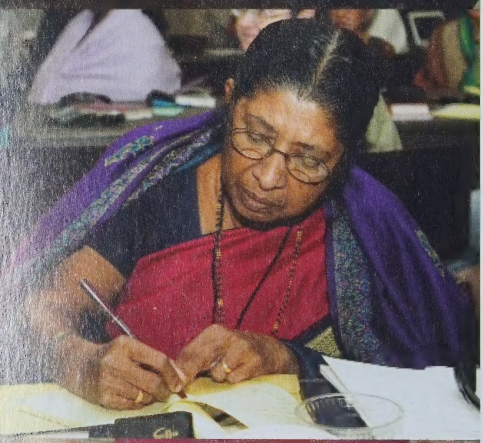
Other recommended books are *Not For Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade—and How We Can Fight It* and *Forgotten Girls: Stories of Hope and Courage*.

Also available on loan through The Book Room is the DVD *I'm not for sale* produced by the RCMP. This resource contains some Public Service Announcements, a ten-minute video, and a twenty-minute video, all of which introduce the issue of human trafficking, and help viewers to learn how to recognize victims of this atrocity.

Whichever topic or topics that your group chooses to study, remember to let other people in the congregation know what you will be doing at your meeting. Announce your topics in your weekly bulletin, post notices on any bulletin board that is available, and mention it in your conversations at coffee hour. Even if they are unable to join you for your study, you may be an inspiration to others to study, and to serve.


FORGOTTEN GIRL
Stories of Hope and Courage
Kay Marshall Strom and Michele Rickett
authors of Daughters of Hope
NOT FOR SALE
The Return of the Global Slave Trade—and How We Can Fight It
DAVID BATSTONE

Birth of an Organization:



A historic meeting was held on June 18 to 28 at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Representatives from the churches that constituted the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) came together to form the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). The aims and objectives of the two organizations were similar—theological reflection and dialogue, ecumenism, justice and partnership, mutual care and fellowship, all based on biblical and confessional integrity. Our Thanksgiving Worship Service is based on materials from this meeting.

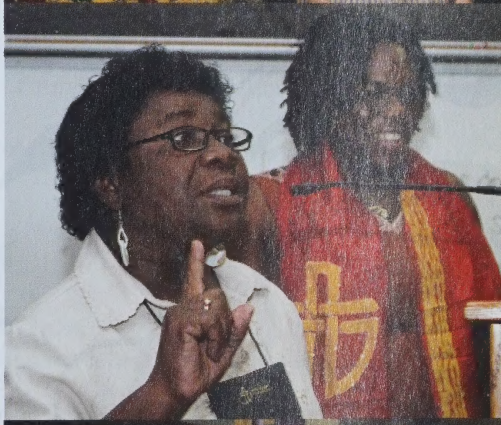
In preparation for this historic merger, a Women's Pre-Council was held at the same site on June 14 to 17. Women from many of the regions of WARC and REC met to reflect, worship, pray, and discuss the message that they wished to present to the Uniting Council later in the week. This message centred around three key issues —**Justice** for all peoples and for the earth; **Communion** providing opportunities for dialogue on matters which make for unity and peace (ordination of women, equal participation in decision making and equal representation of women and men at all levels of the church); and **Partnership** with global partners for justice, especially gender justice. The Women's Pre-Council provided us space to discuss key issues for women in the church and society, with the aim of building solidarity among women.

Since this was an international gathering we had the opportunity to meet with

women from all over the world, making new friends and greeting some old ones. There was ample opportunity to exchange ideas with our sisters from other parts of the world, and to compare the different levels of participation for women in the churches in some of these countries. Out of these comparisons came the emphasis on gender equality in all areas of church life that was the focus of the women's message to the Uniting Council.

It was exciting for those of us from Canada to share worship services and bible study with our sisters in Christ from other parts of the world. Simultaneous translation was provided in French, German, and Spanish so that the speakers could be comfortable speaking in their native language. As for the singing—it was inspiring. The hymns and songs were in their original languages, and we happily followed the words phonetically. Just like the WMS Council meetings, each session started with a sing-a long: lively songs from Jamaica, Korea, and Nicaragua, as well as that well-known favourite, Siyahamba.

Those of us from the WMS who were able to attend this significant happening had the opportunity to build relationships with women from other countries, increase our global network, and gain a better understanding of the importance of our support for justice—for the economy, for the ecology, and for gender equality.



All photos taken by Erick Coll/UGC

This We Affirm

This worship service is based on resources from the Uniting Council Meeting of The World Council of Reformed Churches (see article on pg 22). Participation in leading this service can be shared among as many or as few people, as is appropriate for your group.

The footnotes at the end of the service credit particular resources that are used in the service. The text for the readers is taken from the Message that was sent out from the meeting, to be shared with member congregations around the world. All passages in bold type are intended to be spoken by the whole group. All hymns are from the Book of Praise, *1997.*

Call to Worship:

The heavens tell of the glory of God.
The earth proclaims God's handiwork.
The beauty of the heavens inspire.
The bounty of the earth sustains.
In response to the beauty and the bounty
We give thanks to God!

Hymn: #434 "For the beauty of the earth"

Reader: Last June, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, people from the worldwide family of Reformed Churches, representing 230 denominations and 80 million believers gathered together in a sign of unity. Confessing our past divisions, and rejoicing that, by the grace and forgiveness of God, we are not bound by our past, they participated in the birth of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

Gathered from all corners of the earth, they began their meeting by acknowledging with thanksgiving the opportunity they were given to meet in the traditional territory of the Odawa, Ojibwa, and

Potawatomi Native American peoples. Despite a history of devastation and loss, in which the Church was complicit, they extended to our representatives a gracious welcome, and gave honour to those visiting their land. Through the drum, dance, and song of their culture, the group listened to their confession of Christ. The understanding of mission was challenged to accept different ways of expressing our faith. The witness of these people and this meeting is, for us, an inspiration. As we share the prayers, and listen to the aims of this new form of the body of Christ, we will affirm our place in the ministry of our church.

Prayer of Approach and Confession: [1]

God of glory,
eternal, infinite, almighty, overflowing source of all good,
we profess that our chief end is to glorify you,
and to enjoy you forever.
But too often we fail to glorify you.
We fail to recognize deceit, allowing ourselves to tolerate, and even contribute to evil.
We participate in the degradation of your people and your creation.
This we acknowledge; this we confess.
Covenant God, source of beauty and bounty, have mercy on us.

Saving God,
who seeks us, even when we turn away,
we profess Jesus Christ to be our wisdom,
our hope, and our redemption.
But too often we fail to keep the mind of Christ.
We fail to speak out against greed, allowing ourselves to benefit while others are oppressed.
We contribute to the poverty of your people and your creation.
This we acknowledge; this we confess.
Covenant God, source of beauty and bounty, have mercy on us.

God of Grace,
who gathers the community of faith within the human family,
we profess the unity of the Holy Spirit,
that leads us to worship and to serve.
But too often we fail to value the Spirit's gifts.
We fail to resist the threats to unity, allowing anger and division to separate us from one another.
We make it easier for others to do injury to your people and your creation.
This we acknowledge; this we confess.
Covenant God, source of beauty and bounty, have mercy on us.

Assurance of Pardon:

Our God is a merciful God. We have been assured that there is nothing that is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. We have confessed. We are forgiven.

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:1–7, 11–13

Reader: Focusing on Ephesians chapter 4, verse 3, participants at the WCRC Uniting Council explored the passage through worship in music, dance, drama and sermon. They experienced the overflowing communal nature of God that draws people of faith into communion with God, with one another, and with all creation. This communion is for the sake of the worlds' transformation. Our identity as God's people commits us to the world of God's justice.

In the face of the global divide between rich and poor, and the suffering of the earth, we heard the Gospel of reconciling love.

In response to that love, these church leaders affirmed that we are called to communion and committed to justice. We give thanks to God for the gift of being in communion in the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Let's join together in the Affirmation of Faith made by delegates to the Uniting Council:

Affirmation of Faith: [2]

As believers called to communion
we will bear witness to the triune God,
incarnate in Jesus Christ,
revealed in the Holy Scriptures
through the power of the Holy Spirit.
This we affirm.
This we pledge.
This we celebrate.

As believers called to communion
we will manifest the gifts of unity in Christ
through our study, our service, and
our faithful witness.
This we affirm.
This we pledge.
This we celebrate.

As believers called to communion
we will embrace God's covenant promises
for the redemption, restoration, and renewal
of the whole creation through Jesus Christ.
This we affirm.

This we pledge.
This we celebrate.

As believers called to communion
we will respect, defend, and advance
the dignity of every person
and resist claims of dominance or discrimination
because of race or gender or ethnicity.
This we affirm.
This we pledge.
This we celebrate.

Hymn: #802 "For the fruits of all creation"

Gather the Offering

Prayer of Dedication:

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the beauty and the bounty of your earth. We give thanks for the witness of those who continue to work for unity in your church, and for those who show us the power of your word that calls us to seek justice and peace for your people and your creation. Amen.

Prayers of the People: [3]

God of heaven and earth,
through Jesus Christ you promise to hear us
when we pray to you in his name.
Confident in your love and mercy, we offer our prayer.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Empower the church throughout the world in its life and witness.
Break down the barriers that divide
so that, united in your truth and love,
the church may confess your name,
share one baptism,
sit together at one table,
and serve you in one common ministry.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Hear the cries of the world's hungry and suffering.
Give us, who consume most of the earth's resources,

the will to reorder our lives,
that all might have their rightful share of food,
medical care, and shelter,
and so have the necessities of a life of dignity.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Restore among us a love of the earth you created for our home.
Help us put an end to ravishing its land, air, and waters,
and give us respect for all your creatures,
so that, living in harmony with everything you have made,
your whole creation may resound in an anthem of praise to your glorious name.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Renew our nation in the ways of justice and peace.
Guide those who make and administer our laws
to build a society based on trust and respect.
Erase prejudices that oppress,
free us from crime and violence,
guard our youth from the perils of drugs and materialism.
Give all citizens a new vision of a life of harmony.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Look with compassion on all who suffer.
Support with your love
Those with incurable and stigmatized diseases,
those unjustly imprisoned, those denied dignity,
those who live without hope,
those who are homeless or abandoned.
As you have moved toward us in love,
so lead us to be present with them in their suffering
in the name of Jesus Christ.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Hymn: #410 "Joyful, joyful we adore you"

Sending Into the World

We are sent out in peace to love and serve the Lord, in the unity of the Spirit, called to communion, and committed to justice.

Footnotes/credits

[1] Based on prayer written by Rev. Gerald Dykstra, Christian Reformed Church in North America

[2] Based on a litany written by Rev. Ofelia Ortega, Reformed Presbyterian Church in Cuba

[3] Based on a prayer from *The Worship Sourcebook*, CRC Publications, 2004, p. 206

A puzzle from the books of Samuel

J U D A H A I R U E

I J O N A T H A N D

B A L A E R S I U A

M E H E L H T E B T

M A B E H S H T A B

L E A B I G A I L L

A M E L A S U R E J

S L I N G S H O T L

P H T A I L O G N U

P M I M O L A S B A

O N V N O M O L O S

S L A H C I M D Y A

D E S H E P H E R D

ABIGAIL
ABSALOM
BATHSHEBA
BETHLEHEM
GOLIATH
ISRAEL
JERUSALEM
JONATHAN
JUDAH
MICHAL
PHILISTINE
PSALM
SAUL
SHEPHERD
SLINGSHOT
SOLOMON
URIAH

Solution: Arrange the remaining letters to make a statement:

_ _ _ _

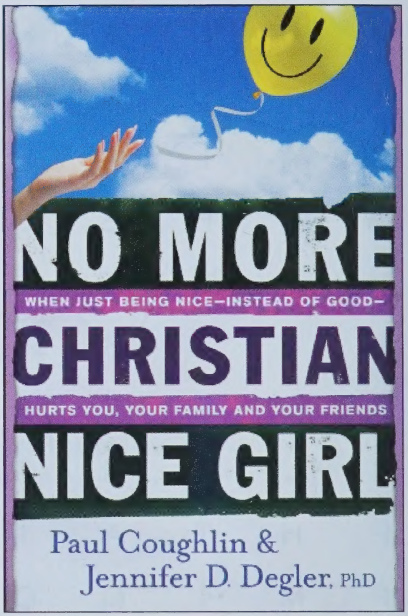
Book Reviews

***No More Christian Nice Girl* by Paul Coughlin and Jennifer D. Degler Ph.D.**

I can still hear my Mother's voice saying, "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all." Aren't Christian girls supposed to be nice? Wasn't Jesus always nice? The title of this book seemed, somehow, wrong. I want to be a God-like person in the world; I think that means I should be nice. I soon discovered that it was my initial reaction to the title that was wrong.

The authors of *No More Christian Nice Girl* show us that we won't experience the abundant life that Jesus promises until we learn to courageously speak the truth in love. The authors describe a number of situations throughout the book that demonstrate the wisdom of this thesis, at the same time providing invaluable insight into the minds of women. The authors also share their insight into the mind of Jesus, who was, is, and always will be, compassionate, bold, and courageous. These characteristics, along with his ability to be kind but firm, make Him much more than 'nice'. They make Him a leader.

When we speak the truth in love, we demonstrate respect to others. When others feel valued and respected, most often they are co-operative and willing to learn. The method taught in this book can help readers find the way to speak their own truths in love,



leading them to be able to become more Christ-like people. When we are able to speak the truth in love, we follow the greatest commandment, which is to love one another.

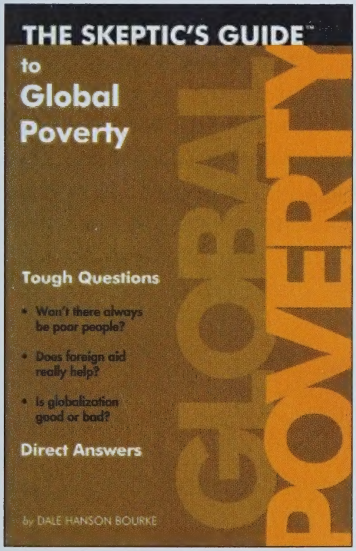
This book reads like a manual on how to get what you want, need, and deserve in life. It enables us, as women, to live a life that is pleasing to God, and loving toward those around us, while at the same time being honest about our wants, needs, and desires. At the end of each chapter, there are thought-provoking questions, suggestions for bible study, and further references that deal with the topic, all of which help put the information in some context.

Reviewed by Cheryl Steeper.

***The Skeptic's Guide to Global Poverty* by Dale Hanson Bourke**

Global poverty is a topic that some people think is discussed too much, with too little result. Too often, those discussions reveal a belief that the fight against poverty is a hopeless cause. Dale Hanson Bourke's book, *The Skeptic's Guide to Global Poverty*, is a refreshing perspective on the issue of global poverty.

"If you are reading this book, you are probably not poor." The sentence that opens Bourke's book is a gentle reminder to the reader that their life situation is much different than that of the book's subjects. The author also reminds the reader that global poverty is not only an issue of economies, but involves issues of societal structure and culture as well.



The book is divided into seven chapters, each covering a distinct, and surprisingly simple, topic. The chapters are laid out in a question-and-answer style, making the information very simple and straightforward to understand. The first chapter provides an introduction to the reality of global poverty. Subsequent chapters work through different aspects of the issue. This breakdown is very well suited to this complicated topic, as it gives the reader hope that they can come to understand the global discussion.

In my studies, I have often tried to avoid discussing global poverty. I have found most discussions to be overly focused, blaming the problem on one specific body. This book succeeds in demonstrating that global poverty cannot be pushed on to the shoulders of one entity. It is a global trend that is entrenched in economics, politics, society, cultures, and everyday life for the vast majority of the world. It is true that there is no simple solution to the problem of global poverty; however, it is important that those of us who can contribute to the solution must do so.

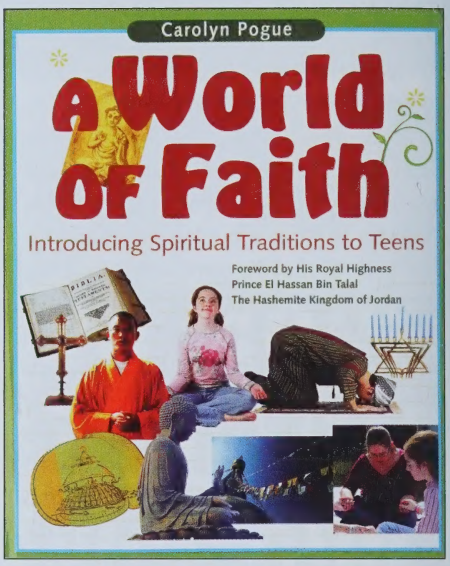
Bourke's final chapter, "What Works," discusses the many ways that the average person can take ownership of the problem and contribute to the

THE Book Room
PCC WMS
The Book Room
50 Wynford Drive,
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
416-441-1111 800-619-7301
bookroom@presbyterian.ca

solution. I found this to be the perfect conclusion to a very real book about a very real problem. I highly recommend this book as an introduction to, or as a refreshing look at, the discussion of global poverty.

***A World of Faith: Introducing Spiritual Traditions to Teens* by Carolyn Pogue**

If you are looking for resources to use for a Communicant's program, Youth Class, or teaching series on world religions, then *A World of Faith* is a great start. Canadian author Carolyn Pogue, a well known peacemaker, offers what amounts to a survey course on nine major world religions, covering their history, sacred writings, practices, and major religious figures. Pogue picks just the right details to entice important and meaningful dialogue. Each of the chapters is bookended by the featured religion's take on the 'Golden Rule' and, what Pogue has called, the 'Green Rule' (how each tradition understands the divine relationship between humanity and the Earth). Within each chapter are interesting historical facts, rites of passage, as well as stories and interviews with adolescent practitioners. My favourite features of this book were the 'Thumbnail Sketch' and the 'Words to Know' sections, which offer quick facts, such as dates of origin, places of worship, specific holy days, and quick definitions for tradition-specific words. For instance, in the chapter on Christianity, Pogue concisely defines terms such as 'sacrament' and 'denomination'.


Carolyn Pogue
A World of Faith
Introducing Spiritual Traditions to Teens
Foreword by His Royal Highness
Prince El Hassan Bin Talal
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

This is a great book—one which I will most definitely use myself! My only real concern is that too many historical details have been left out. Like the author, I place high value on equality, peace, justice, and environmentalism. Unfortunately, in her recording of historical events, she has allowed her biases to influence her decisions about what to include and what to leave out. When using this book as a teaching tool, it will be important to ensure that additional resources are available in order to achieve a well-rounded session.

Overall, I appreciate that Pogue's perspective on inter-faith dialogue is not based on finding the *lowest common denominator*, but on celebrating diversity and the *highest common goal* of striving together for peace and justice in the world.

Reviewed by Rev. Jacqui Foxall

Whoever said, "You can't have your cake and eat it too," never heard of Gift Annuities

Gift Annuities are a way you can make a gift to the church to support the ministry of your choice and in return receive a guaranteed annual income for life, the majority or all of the income tax-free. Sound too good to be true? Call the Planned Giving Office today to learn how you can have your cake and eat it too.

What flavour of ministry would you like to support?

A real life example:

In 1994, Giollo Kelly acquired a $10,000 gift annuity which she designated for the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation. When she died fifteen years later, Giollo had received nearly $11,000 (87% tax-free) in total payments and left a legacy of nearly $7,500 with the money remaining in her annuity account.

(The above example is for illustrative purposes only. Annuity rates and the residue available for disbursement vary.)

For a free, no-obligation gift annuity quote, contact

Planned Giving Office
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
1-800-619-7301
plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca

Mission in Action

Csongi Kelemen
Protestant Theological Institute
Cluj, Romania

At the Protestant Theological Institute in Cluj, each class has its own mission task, such as taking lunch to elderly people, hospital visiting, or working with the mission to the blind or deaf. The assignment for the second-year class this year is to work with homeless people.

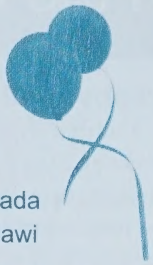
I was enthusiastic about taking part in this project, because I had heard so many interesting stories and facts from the students who had been involved in previous years. The project requires the class to organize weekly events for homeless people. We want to give them a chance to come together and share in a simple meal, and offer a short worship service. I was excited about it, but also apprehensive. I wondered how I would be able to talk about faith with people whose lives are so different from mine. I wanted to find words that would strengthen and encourage them, but I didn't know if I would be able. And even before these questions for myself, I wondered how we would get these people together in one place at the same time.

All of these questions were answered on the day that we started the project. A few students from the third-year class, who took part in this mission last year, led the way. Our first task was to tell the homeless people in the city (or at least to as many as we could find) about the upcoming services. We did this by packing some lunches—sandwiches, sweets, and fruit—and going out in groups of two or three to visit different areas of the city where homeless people are known to spend their time. We visited some parks, some markets, and the train station. Along the way we spoke to as many homeless people as we could find, giving them some food, asking about their well-being, and inviting them to the next week's service in the park.

Before we set out I was concerned that we might not be able to identify the people who are in need. Shortly after setting out, I realized that it wasn't that hard to spot homeless people. We just looked for people whose clothing was ragged, whose faces were rugged and bearded, or who were intoxicated. We also found that if we watched, we could identify people who were always walking, but who never went anywhere. I was very surprised that virtually all of the people that we talked with admitted that they were in need of food, and were happy to accept our offer. I was even more surprised when most of the folks we spoke with promised to come to the service the next week. We were afraid that some of the people we met wouldn't be able to remember what we were telling them, but it was worth a try.

When we got to the underground passages of the train station, identifying homeless people became more difficult. There were many civic workers who were very rugged looking. As I stood with the members of my small group, something interesting happened. A man approached us, asking if we are looking for something in particular. We were not certain, but our guess was that this man was a pimp. Uncertain of how he would respond to us, we explained that we had come from the Theological Institute, and that we were looking for homeless people to help. We were very surprised when he offered to help us. "I know all of these people here. I know those who are in need, so I will point them out to you. Come with me!" With his assistance, we gave away all that we had very quickly. The most beautiful part was that we could see the gratitude on the peoples' faces. We could tell that they really needed what we had to offer, eating it as quickly as they could.

Overseas Staff Birthdays



October

20 - Jim Young, Grenada
23 - Glenn Inglis, Malawi

December

15 - Rick Allen, Kenya
27 - Mary Gorombey, Hungary
29 - Rachel Julianna Pandy-Szekeres, Hungary
29 - Jackie Hoekstra, Malawi

At the end of this day, our new "friend" said he would be glad to help us whenever we have this project. The next four or five times that we visited the underground of the station, he was always there, ready to help us.

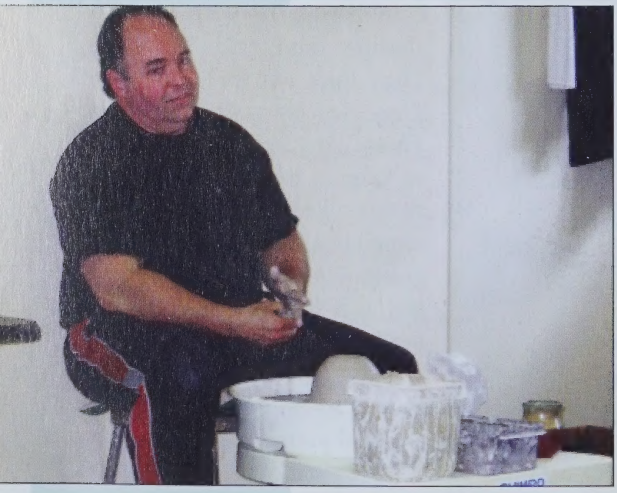
There is a wonderful feeling in the air at the weekly services we held in the park. People who didn't know each other before are now part of a community. They sit together, sharing food, and the Word. They look out for each other. They even help us to help them. Those conversations that I was so keen to be involved in have slowly taken place. I will always remember what one man in the group said to me: "Look, you are, just like me. I search for food that people throw away, but you search for people that society has thrown away. So we are all dumpster-searchers."

Presbyterial

London Presbyterial WMS held a retreat on May 6, 2010 at Backus-Page Museum near Wallacetown, ON. The day began early with morning snacks prepared and served by the ladies of Knox, Fingal WMS. President Mary Lou McKay welcomed everyone, led in prayer, and introduced Heather Morton from West Lorne. Heather led the ladies in a lively sing-song of favourites from Sunday School days.

Belmont WMS ladies conducted a short worship service. Through the reading of "Ten Points of Gardening," scripture, and the poem "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," participants were made more aware and appreciative of nature in God's world.

Elaine Brown introduced the morning speaker, Pastor Brian Barry from Iona Fellowship Church. Using his potter's wheel and a mound of clay, Pastor Barry shared his insights into the nature of faith. Clay needs to be prepared by wedging (a bit like kneading bread), and then has a journey on the wheel where it is ever-changing, like our lives. The potter's call to the clay to service and function is like God's call to us to serve in Christ. The potter centring the clay on the wheel is like us setting our foundation with the word of God. Water is needed to make a good pot and the potter works from the inside to the outside. Like the pot, if we have our inside thinking right, we can do anything. The collaring time (shaping the walls inward) helps the potter strengthen weak spots, which is like the times in our lives when we are experiencing sickness, weakness, or any other problems and our faith gives us needed strength. Shaping the clay is the last step to make the clay functional. Pastor Barry stressed that just like a piece of clay, everyone has a form and function!



Lunch hour was spent enjoying the museum surroundings. Some members of the group joined Museum Cultural Manager Lori Midos-Ivanski on a tour of the 1850 Georgian Home. Others enjoyed a nature walk through John E. Pearce Provincial Park to view the abundance of spring flowers and the shore of Lake Erie.

Dorothy Neal (left) was president of the Hamilton and London Synodical from 1981 to 1984. She recently installed the officers of the Synod (now South Western Ontario) including her daughter Bonnie Arbour (right). Can we say "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree?"

The afternoon speaker was Alice Paterson from Rodney, ON. More than 200 years ago—1803 to be exact—Colonel Thomas Talbot came to Elgin County and established a colony in the area of the Backus-Page Museum. Alice brought history to life as she dressed and spoke as Mary Storey, an early settler who arrived in 1809 and made her home on the property now preserved as a museum. Mary, a widow, was 51 years old when she came to Canada with her brother and three of her children.

Catherine McMillan thanked everyone for an informative and inspirational day.

Submitted by Elaine Brown

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Stratford, hosted the Spring Rally of the Women's Missionary Society of **Huron Perth Presbyterial**. The theme of the Rally was *Scattered by the Spirit*.

St.Marys Friendship Auxiliary looked after registration for the 42 ladies who attended the event. Morning refreshments were served by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Women. Rev. Hugh Jones welcomed the ladies on behalf of the Session, and Bernice Richards welcomed everyone on behalf of St. Andrew's WMS. Morning devotions were given by St. Andrew's Ladies, which concluded with everyone singing the hymn *Born of the Spirit* and repeating the WMS purpose.

Mary Duffin introduced the speaker, Barbara Summers, Communications Coordinator for PWS&D. Barb was very enthusiastic as she shared stories and pictures of various groups and projects supported by PWS&D. It was good to be reminded that despite the bad news we hear every day, some good things are happening around the world. Mary Scott expressed appreciation to Barb.

A book review was given by Ruth Hart and she encouraged all to check the book table for a variety of good reading. Mary Duffin described the WMS Council meeting which she was pleased to have attended. Highlights of the 2010 Synodical were given by Lois Horne, Ruth Hart, and Mary Scott.

Lunch was served by the St. Andrew's ladies with grace offered by Lillian Sparling of Cromarty WMS. The afternoon began with a sing song lead by Ruth Reath, with Lois Kipfer at the piano. Afternoon devotions were given by the Atwood ladies.

The afternoon speaker was Oliver Zorgdrager who gave a very interesting account of his experience traveling to Guatemala, where he participated in the building of two houses. He described some aspects of life in Guatemala, including the challenging roads and sleeping conditions. He described what he had seen of how the women work at carrying bricks and mixing cement on the ground. He based his presentation on the motto "Sent by the Spirit." Helen Dunseith expressed appreciation to Oliver.

The business of the meeting included a roll call, an offering, an update on the *Pennies for Patrick* project and a treasurer's report. Announcements included the Fall Rally at Atwood Church on September 23, and the Fall Executive meeting in Mitchell on October 4 at 1:30 p.m.

A bag of lovely knitting was received for shipment to missions. Courtesies of the day were given by Motherwell Avonbank Ladies. A special prayer was offered by the president for Elisabeth Stewart and her family. The rally closed with the singing of the hymn *Spirit of Gentleness* and a prayer by Lois Horne.

Submitted by Ina McMillan

Niagara Presbyterial has reports from two events.

The Spring Rally was held at Knox Church, Dunnville. Mary Lou Johnston welcomed members on behalf of the host group. Gail Opie gave an interesting and enthusiastic report of the Synodical meetings she had attended recently at Chedoke Presbyterian Church in Hamilton.

Our guest speaker was Karen Mackay. In 1992, Karen and her husband, Dr. Fraser Mackay, spent a year

Human Trafficking:
Update

Many WMS groups were involved in collecting signatures in support of Bill C-268, the private member's bill that introduced a minimum sentence of five years in prison for those convicte of trafficking children. The bill passed

in Malawi at Livingstonia and Ekwendeni Hospitals, appointed by International Ministries of the PCC. In August of 2009, Karen and Fraser, accompanied by their two teenage sons, returned to Malawi for three weeks to visit the people and projects they had worked with 17 years ago. The message Karen brought us was one of good news: They saw a reduction in malnutrition due to practices such as rotation of crops and recipe programs to encourage and help people to use less familiar crops. These agricultural programs are run by Malawians, with financial support and encouragement from PWS&D. They saw some mills available for grinding the staple food maize, which have reduced that task for women from one week to half a day. Mosquito nets have helped to reduce the incidence of malaria.

HIV/AIDS has had a devastating effect on the country. They saw teenagers caring for three or four younger siblings whose parents have died because of HIV/AIDS. The McKays were encouraged by the nursery schools for young ones and support centres for the caregivers run by the church there. There has been a change in the reaction to people who are HIV positive. There are lots of support groups and Health Posts where people can go to be tested for the HIV virus. There are now drugs for pregnant women that have succeeded in reducing the transmission of the virus from mother to child by 70%. Change is happening thanks to gifts from our Church and others. Everyone the McKays met asked them to bring messages of "Thanks" to friends in Canada. Karen closed her presentation by reading 1 Peter 4:10–11.

The Annual Picnic was held on June 23 on the lovely creek-side lawn of the home of Donna Bachur. Presbyterial president, Joan Weaver, welcomed the 38 members and one guest. Following the delicious potluck picnic lunch, Joan introduced Jackie Morgan, from Chippawa, who demonstrated how to pack an overnight bag using sealable

n both the House of Commons and the Senate, and will soon be presented to
ne Governor General for Royal Assent. MP Joy Smith has acknowledged that
ne tens of thousands of people who supported this bill by signing petitions,
nd communicating with elected officials and Senators were heard.

here is still a great deal of work to do, at the political and social levels, to end
odern slavery. We can celebrate this victory but we must acknowledge that
e need to continue to study the issue, and work to change the attitudes and
ctions that permit children, women, and men to be bought and sold as if they
ere no more than objects.

plastic bags. The clothing was neatly folded, inserted into a bag, and then sealed after all the air had been pressed out. She also gave a number of tips on what to pack, such as small zippered bags to hold small containers of cosmetics and toiletries. Jackie was thanked by Gail Opie. Jackie's packing demonstration should be of value to those attending our Crieff retreat on October 12–13, when Karen Mackay is scheduled to be our guest again.

Bonnie Roland conducted an enjoyable walk on the park-like property along the creek. The creek bank, made up of layers of rock, and a huge tree estimated to be several hundred years old, were of particular interest.

Submitted by Hazel McGraw
and Margaret Combe

The June Rally of the **Presbyterial of Lanark-Renfrew** took place on a sunny June day at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Carleton Place. President Lottie Sutherland welcomed the 27 ladies and constituted the meeting with prayer. Westport WMS led the devotions and hymns were sung while Betty Zwiers accompanied the group on the piano.

Highlights of the Synodical meeting, held in Kemptville on April 23–24, were given by Margaret Sams and Mary Lynn McConnachie. Mary Lynn also spoke on the Annual Council meeting at Crieff where the theme was "Women: Beloved by God." Mary Lynn felt it was a privilege to have attended as a delegate to Crieff where she met Rev. Dr. Dorcas Gordon, Rev. Arlene Onuoha, Rev. Linda Bell, and Rev. Harvey Self, all speakers at Council.

After grace, everyone enjoyed a delicious pot-luck lunch. The afternoon began with prayer followed by the singing of *Who's going to tell the story?* Vivian Young led some interesting games until the guest speaker, 'Zelda', arrived. Zelda, also known as Rosemary Rutley, gave a very entertaining motivational speech. With her flashy garb and her outrageous humour, she kept the ladies smiling and laughing. She was thanked by Lottie Sutherland.

The next Presbyterial meeting will take place in Smiths Falls on September 18, 2010. The Fall Synodical meeting will be held in Renfrew on October 20, 2010 at the home church of the Synodical president, Joan Hilliard. The meeting closed with prayer.

Submitted by Vivian Young

Bless the Little Children was the theme for the **Maitland Presbyterial** Women's Missionary Society meeting held on Monday, May 17, at Knox Presbyterian Church, Ripley. There was a fun time of fellowship and delicious desserts served by the Ripley women. President Joanne Lennips constituted the meeting with prayer and welcomed everyone. Marion and Norma Raynard led the group in a lively sing-song. Erlma Haldenby led the worship time based on Matthew 19, Mark 9:42, and Joel 1:2. Guest speakers were Suzanne and Anne Andrew, who shared stories

from their mission trip to India with Sleeping Children Around the World (SCAW). An Honorary Membership was presented to Twyla Jackman from Molesworth for her many years of faithful service to WMS. The Fall Rally will be held in Kinloss, on September 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Jubilee Church in Stayner, ON hosted **Barrie Presbyterial's** Annual Meeting on May 25, 2010. President Dorothy Ruddell welcomed everyone. The devotions were prepared and presented by Aileen Wallace, Julia Ranson, and Jean Kerr, all from the Midland WMS. After the reports were duly received and accepted, we heard great reviews from the Synodical

Ella Boyd, daughter of Phoebe Cauthers, one of the charter members from 1910, cut the cake to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the WMS of St. Andrew's, Mansfield, ON. Forty-five guests were treated to a delicious afternoon tea and an entertaining program. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful time of fellowship and renewing acquaintances.

Members and Associate Members of the St. Andrew's, Mansfield WMS celebrated the 100th anniversary of the group.

delegates. Elaine Steele, who is on WMS Executive Council, spoke on the May Council meeting. Rev. Lynda Reid informed us about the 2011 National Presbyterian Women's Gathering in Richmond Hill. She also installed the officers for 2010—2011. A review of humourous books was presented by Lois Cullis.

Carolyn Woodrow had just returned from the mission trip to the Cariboo. She shared with us some of the highlights of this venture. After conducting the memorial service, Jill Pardy led the mission prayer. She was assisted by Irene Boyes, Reta Tanner, and Dorothy Ruddell.

Our guest speaker was the Rev. Jeffrey Crawford, Youth Ministry Consultant. He stressed that we must stay connected with the youth in our churches. The mission of the church is to confess hope in action. In the church, tell the story; in the world, live the story.

The courtesies, in rhyme, were given by Jill Pardy. The meeting ended with the benediction by Rev. Lynda Reid.

Submitted by Jill Pardy

Members of the Alexandra Johnston WMS, Central Church in Brantford, ON celebrated Margaret Belcher's 90th birthday. Pictured with the cake are: Mariella Wagner, Margaret Belcher, Ruth Long, Rev. Hugh Nugent, Frances Nugent.

In recognition of their 125th Anniversary of mission work, the WMS of Knox, Morrisburg, ON received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Brockville Presbyterial. The Certificate was presented by Mary Moorhead (left), a former WMS President, and received by Margaret Reynolds (right), currently a member of WMS Council Executive.

Local

On June 2, 2010 Esson WMS held its 117th Anniversary. Celebrations included the presentation of three Life Memberships. Pictured with their certificates are Margaret Longman, Jean Horne, and Elinor Hay. Tributes to three people awarded Life Memberships by Esson WMS were presented in verse:

Our *Elinor* has joined the group,
now in her fourteenth year.
She helps with meetings month by month,
at member's homes or here.

The nominating pair has tried
positions all to fill.
When Elinor got on the phone,
she used persuasive skill.

Four years she also checked the books.
(To "audit" was the old term.)
With partner, figures she did check,
the totals to confirm.

Big Cedar is where she does live,
invites us to her home.
In Texas winters used to spend
but now, not far does roam.

Jean Horne, a member lots of years,
(I do not know the sum.)
When she was working as a nurse,
for some months could not come.

When Jean retired, soon began
to take on leadership
Vice-president, then President,
she led our fellowship.

A few years off from leading roles,
yet Jean led programs then.
Re-cycling being now the norm,
she started back again.

Vice-president and President,
Jean took control once more,
Past-President is now her role,
it is a lesser chore.

Now *Margaret Langman* joined our group
in year two thousand two.
And of those nine years, she has held
six meetings for our crew.

When her name comes at roll call times
she sometimes treats us then
to one of poems she composed
while writing in her den.

For some six years with Mary R.
the two have friendship given
with cards and flowers, cookies too,
to ailing folks have driven

At meetings Margaret leads with prayer
and reads the Scripture too.
A good example in this church
to each in ev'ry pew.

Address Change

Denise Van Wissen and Family have left Guatemala
Address from September to December 2010
2066 Rebecca St., Oakville, ON L5L 2A2

Denise and her family will be moving to Nicaragua in January.

Members of the Rockwood WMS Twilight Auxiliary are shown as they celebrate the 53rd Anniversary of their group. Many of these women have been members since the first meeting.

On May 28–30, **Ontario CGIT** held their 8th Jamboree to celebrate the 95th Anniversary of CGIT at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp near Sauble Beach. The Owen Sound Workboard Ladies & Leaders made all the arrangements—even the cooking of all our delicious meals. Participants appreciated the organizers and the Camp's cabins, which were quite a change from past Jamborees where we slept in tents and did our own cooking. Morning Watch (God's Gifts to us) and evening campfire with singing and Vespers framed each day. An 'Amazing Race' and other engaging activities, such as canoeing, hiking, crafts, archery, scrapbooking, puppetry, outdoor gourmet cooking, and musical jam sessions kept everyone busy. Saturday night's entertainment was our very own CGIT Talent Show with singing, guitars, flutes, baton twirling, puppets, and dancing. Sunday Worship was held at the camp-fire. It was a very enjoyable birthday party weekend, and we were grateful for sunny skies!

We are looking forward to 2015 when we will celebrate 100 years of CGIT. Hopefully anyone who was in CGIT will find a celebration they can join. Past members are encouraged to plan reunions for their own groups!

CGIT Jamboree 2010
Silver Lake Mennonite Ca

Forward in Faith

Did you know?

As a relatively new Treasurer of the WMS, I am constantly finding out about new things. I recently had the privilege of meeting with Dr. Pauline Brown, who has been a missionary in India for almost 60 years. We chatted about the Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Fund and I learned some very interesting information.

The Dr. Pauline Brown Fund was established at the time Pauline received her Honourary Doctor of Divinity (honouris causa) from Knox College in 1998 by friends who wished to honour her for many years of service among the Bhil people of India. The donations made at that time provided the capital of the fund. The interest from these donations is used to provide bursary assistance to students training for Health Care positions (nurses and nursing assistants) in India.

When decisions are being made regarding the bursaries, people from the Vindhya Satpura (Bhil) area will be given preference. The expectation is that recipients will work in the Bhopal Diocese when they have completed their studies. The recipients of the Bursary are chosen by the Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Committee, which is made up of the following people: Dean of Vindhya Satpura Church Council, Medical Superintendent of Jobat Hospital, Nursing Superintendent of Jobat Hospital, Principal of the School of Nursing at Indore, and Dr. Pauline Brown (for as long as she feels able).

This information was news to me and perhaps it is to you, too. The WMS has recently sent 90,000 rupees to India (a bit more than $2,200 CAD) which will provide funding for four women whose current studies meet the criteria. Normally we would assist only one person per year, but interest has accumulated for a few years, so money was available for these grants.

Donations can still be made to this fund. If you are interested in making a contribution, please send your cheque to Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7. Cheques should be made payable to the Women's Missionary Society and marked for the Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Fund.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Brewer

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

Glad Tidings has shown how mission work has changed over the years, but our publication continues to tell the story of mission. Through *Glad Tidings*, we are able to reach out to all people. By helping to promote *Glad Tidings*, you are helping to spread God's word to everyone.

The implementation of the HST affects subscriptions to *Glad Tidings*. The following information was noted in the mailing that went out in August to all groups.

The subscription rate for 2011 is $13.50 plus applicable taxes: ON—$15.25; BC—$15.12; NS—$15.53; all other provinces—$14.18

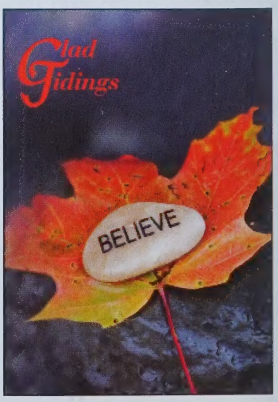
To make collection and accounting easier, groups and individuals are encouraged to round up the subscription price to the nearest twenty-five cents, and consider any additional pennies as a contribution to the production expenses of *Glad Tidings*.

The deadline for renewing the magazine is November 1, so please ensure that you have your money ready when the *Glad Tidings* secretary/contact person begins collecting for next year's subscription.

Beginning with this issue, the audio version of *Glad Tidings* has been changed from cassette tape to CD. If you know of anyone who may wish to receive the magazine on CD, please let your *Glad Tidings* Secretary/Contact person know, so this information can be included when the list of subscribers is sent to the WMS office.

If you have any questions or problems about receiving your magazine, or if you have a change of address, please contact the Circulation Manager immediately.

Pass Me Along: Share the Wealth



Sharing the information and articles from *Glad Tidings* is a great way to remind people of the work of the WMS and the mission community that serves our church. When you have finished reading your copy, share:

- The *Christian Witness in Harsh Conditions* articles, and *Haiti Update*, with someone from your congregation's Mission and Outreach Committee
- *Cooking up Controversy* with anyone you think might be interested in the National Women's Gathering
- Mission in Action with any university-aged students

In Memoriam

Lorraine (Laurie) Jackson, beloved wife and ministry partner of Rev. Larry Jackson, passed away on June 9. She was truly a devoted child of God, serving Him with her many talents. She did mission work with youth, served as a nurse in Newfoundland, and Manitoba. After marrying Larry, Laurie served with him in churches in Ontario and British Columbia. She had the gift of leadership, and was a great encourager of others. She served with PWS&D and as president of Presbyterials and Synodical in BC. Laurie was a great story teller. Both children and adults looked forward to her meaningful Bible stories. She compiled some into a book called "Come Walk with Me."

In 2001, Laurie suffered a debilitating stroke, and this affected her speech. Through her cheerful spirit she showed courage and inspiration to those who cared for her as well as her visitors. She gave a sign of "thumbs up" to show joy and approval. Truly she showed others that "nothing can separate us from the love of God."

Her celebration of life service was held at Richmond Presbyterian Church on June 17.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Verna Ward
Grace Paterson
St. Andrew's, Hanover, ON

Eleanor Scott
Twilight Auxiliary
Rockwood Presbyterian, ON

(Mary) Barbara Bateman
St. Andrew's, Belleville, ON

Anne Lennie
Anna Cooper Auxiliary,
Willowdale Presbyterian,
(formerly Cooke's)
Toronto, ON

Betty Hetherington
Emily Wise
Ruth Irving
Laurel-Lea St. Matthew's,
Sarnia, ON

Marion Julian
St. Andrew's, Beeton, ON

Florence Stewart
St. Andrew's, Beamsville, ON

Elsie Splawski
Knox Presbyterian Church, Sooke, BC

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

National Presbyterian Women's Gathering 2011

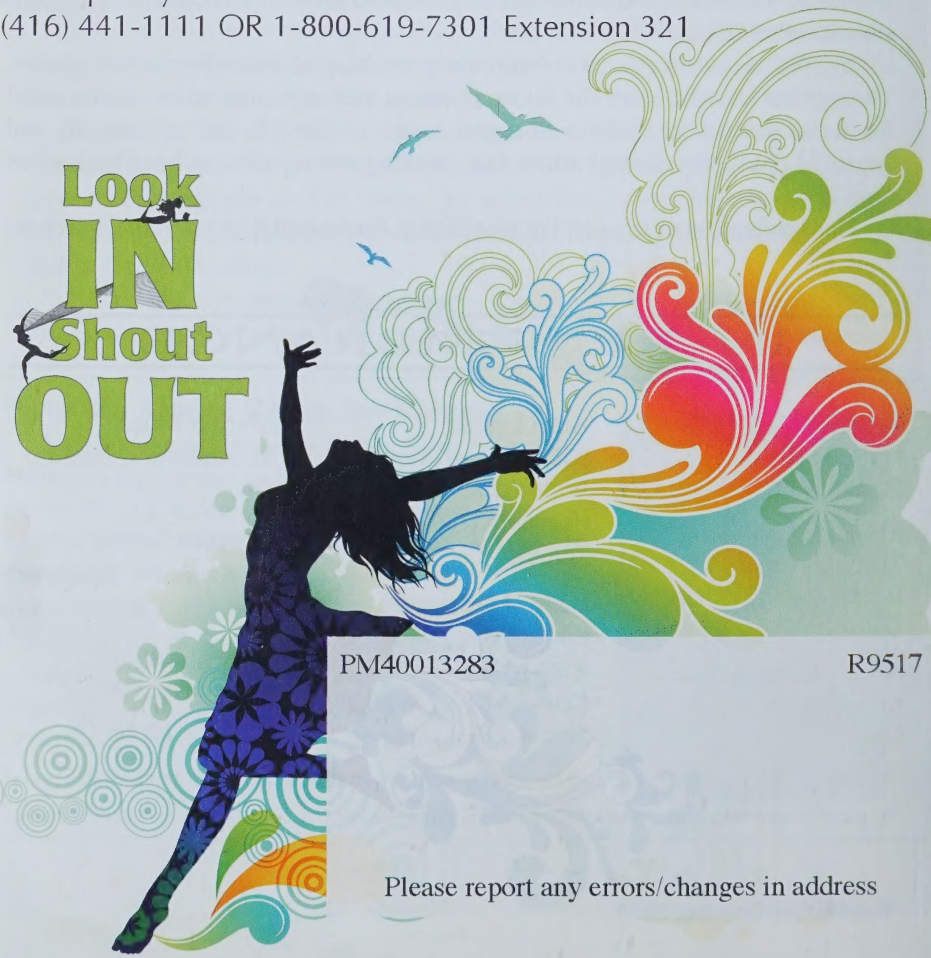
Date: May 20-21, 2011

Place: Sheraton Parkway Hotel, Richmond Hil (GTA), Ontario

Registration Fees:
$325 before November 15, 2010
$425 before March 31, 2011

Family Rate:
$50.00 off per person (18 years+)

Inquiries:
skim@presbyterian.ca
(416) 441-1111 OR 1-800-619-7301 Extension 321



PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address

Glad Tidings

November/December 2010

Contents

Features

Christmas and Little Ones
Katie Munnik
Page 5

Advent Reflections
Anne Russell
Page 10

15 **The Great Adventure** . . . . . *Susan Naylor*
17 **Consider Hosting Your Own Great Adventure!** . . . . . .
19 **President's Itinerary** . . . . . .
20 **My Prophet** . . . . . *Audrey Cameron*
23 **Raising Our Voices** . . . . . *Colleen Wood*
24 **Leaning into the Future** . . . . . *Joan Masterton*
28 **Together We Can! Projects** . . . . . .
41 **Remembering ... Students** . . . . . *Colleen Wood*
44 **Who and Where** . . . . . .

Regulars

3 **From the Editor's Desk** . . . . . .
32 **Book Reviews** . . . . . .
38 **Mission in Action** . . . . . .
42 **In the Society** . . . . . .
43 **Forward in Faith** . . . . . .
46 **Pass Me Along** . . . . . .
47 **Circulation News** . . . . . .
47 **In Remembrance** . . . . . .

O come, O come, Emmanuel!

Glad Tidings

November/December 2010
Volume 86, No. 6

EDITOR
COLLEEN WOOD
DESIGN
ALEXIS McKEOWN
CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

Published six times a year by the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to the circulation department at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Phone (416) 441-1111. Fax (416) 441-2825. E-mail Editorial gladtidings@presbyterian.ca. Circulation kallen@presbyterian.ca. Publications mail registration number 09517. ISSN: 00170720.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund (CPF) for our publishing activities.

Canada

Member of the Canadian Church Press.

Annual subscription rate $13.50 plus applicable taxes: ON, NB, NL $15.25, BC $15.12, NS $15.53, AB, SK, MB, QC, PE $14.18. To determine cost for single copies, please divide by the appropriate figure by 6. WMS members are asked to send subscriptions through their group *Glad Tidings* Secretary. Individual subscribers may order direct from *Glad Tidings*. Please make all cheques and money orders payable at par to *Glad Tidings*.

Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

Glad Tidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Colleen Wood

From the Editor's Desk

Wow. Time sure flies. As many of you know, this is my first edition back after taking a year of maternity leave with the birth of my second child. It was a wonderful year as I watched my daughter grow and change and was able to spend more time with my four-year-old son as well. I am sure you will hear tales from them now that I am back in the writing seat!

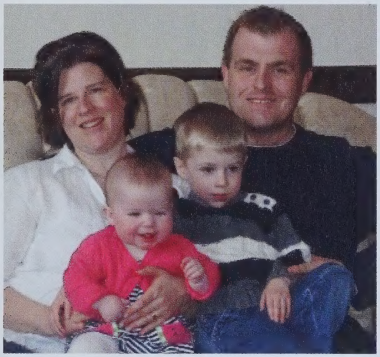
First, a heartfelt 'thank you' to the Rev. Heather Jones, who capably filled my maternity leave as your Interim Editor. It was great to be on the receiving end of the *Glad Tidings* this year. I really appreciated Heather's ability to tackle some challenging topics. I also appreciated her contacts with different writers—all bringing their own interesting perspectives on so many different topics.

Heather also brought us through one major change this year. *Glad Tidings* is now available on audio CD! We have had a cassette tape version for many years, but this is now replaced with a CD edition for those who are visually impaired. A big 'thank you' goes out to Heather for her research on this, and for making it happen! If you, or someone you know, would benefit from the audio version of *Glad Tidings*, please contact us. And you don't have to be visually impaired to enjoy it. Consider getting the CD to listen to on your morning commute or perhaps while doing household chores.

As I return to work on this edition of *Glad Tidings*, the summer weather is beginning to cool and I am appropriately having to think about Christmas. This year, the focus is on not just Christmas, but also on Advent. For me, Advent is a time of preparation, a time of repentance, and also a time of transformation.

Many of us take this time to transform our homes. Many of us decorate, some choosing nativities as a part of that. As I read through Anne Russell's Advent devotionals, I was especially struck by her memories of setting up her nativity with her children. My husband and I are a little obsessed with nativities. We must have five or six of them, most from fairly traded sources. We have so many because we want the birth of Christ to dominate our Christmas. We also have so many because we want them to be accessible to our children.

You see, all but one of our nativity sets, are perfect for little hands to play with. I even splurged on the Little People nativity from Fisher Price that has plastic



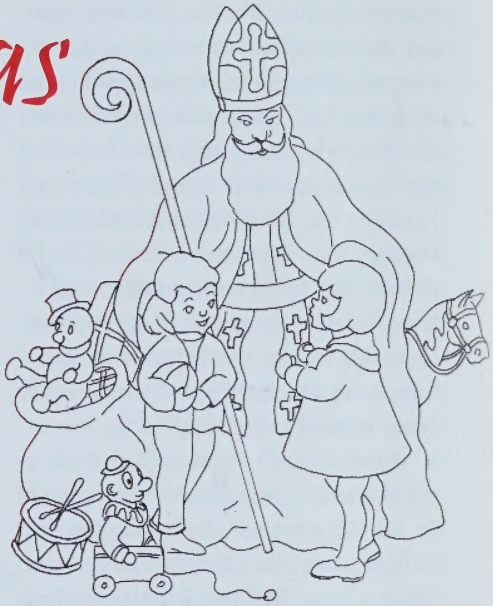
figures singing Away in a Manger. We also have a brightly-coloured wooden set, a finger puppet set, and another wooden set that is not easily broken. We want our children to touch them, to move them as they listen to the birth narrative, and to retell the story themselves (even if that means our four-year-old adds pirates and superheroes to the story). We want them to be transformed by the story. I pray that through Ann's devotionals, you will be transformed this Advent Season.

I also wonder if the article, *Christmas & Little Ones*, might transform your celebrations. Like Katie, I am drawn to the real story of Saint Nicholas, though my son is just as happy with the Santa at the mall. I expect, like with most parenting, our Christmas celebrations are a work in progress with some aspects already established as traditions, and others that, I hope, will run their course. Perhaps, as you reflect on your own celebrations, you may want to learn more about Saint Nicholas, and be transformed by his generosity.

Finally this month, you have two programs to consider. You might decide to cancel or transform your December WMS meeting into a Great ADVENTure. Consider inviting all the women of the church, families, or just anyone with a desire to learn and celebrate with you. It might be a little more work, but well worth it as you help others to prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ. As well, you will find the Christmas worship service. Christmas is a great time to invite others from the church to join your WMS group for your meeting. You never know—they might like it so much, that they will come back and join!

In closing, I wish you a blessed Advent and Christmas. As you remember the birth of Christ, may you be transformed by God's everlasting love.

Christmas & Little Ones



by Katie Munnik

Christmas Confusion

My son was baptised at Christmas. We were spending the holiday with my in-laws on the West Coast and we decided that it was easier to have him baptised at their church than it would be for them to travel out to Ottawa. We were also close with their minister and the congregation was delighted to welcome Leo into the church family on behalf of the Church worldwide. Leo was tiny—only six weeks old—and he was baptised during the Christmas pageant.

It was not a conventional baptism, I can tell you, but it was beautiful. Picture it—diminutive shepherds and angels peering up over the rim of the font while the minister gently held my son and announced to him the promises of our loving God. Candles and water and gifts from God; it was moving and memorable as every baptism should be.

But, I'm afraid, it confused my daughter. She was two-and-a-half at the time, and became convinced that there were always costumes to be had at a baptism. "Where are the shepherds?" she would ask me at later baptisms. "When can I dress up? And, where are the angels?"

I worry that Christmas can often be confusing like this for our little ones, too. It is a rushed and magical season, overwhelming to the senses, and in the middle of all the bustle, we offer our children an impossible conflation of stories. Jesus and Santa Claus and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Frosty the Snowman and Charlie Brown and who knows what else .... It's all seasonal, so it's all appropriate, right? How do we help them know which are fun stories and which is the Story behind everything?

Now, I don't want to just dismiss Santa and his gang. I don't want my kid to be the one on the toboggan hill telling everyone else that there is no Santa Claus. But as Christian parents (and grandparents and aunts and uncles, Sunday school teachers and ushers and pourers of apple juice at coffee hour), how do we share the wonder of the Christmas gospel while honouring the cultural magic of the secular side of Christmas?

Will the real Santa please step forward?

I thought that the best way to answer this problem for my family was to take a good long look at the most compelling distraction from the manger scene: Santa Claus himself—fat, jolly, red, and benevolent. It's hard to take a stand against Santa. He is wholesome through and through, although perhaps conflicted in his thoughts about morality and indulgence. He is also, however, the most blatant symbol of a commercialised Christmas, the kind of Christmas that emphasises sentiment and spending over stars and saviours. But, things become a little clearer when we remember that Santa Claus didn't start out as a Coca-Cola commercial.

He was originally Saint Nicholas, born during the third century, in what is now part of Turkey. He was raised in a Christian family by parents keen to share the faith with their son. They died while Nicholas was still young and

Glory to God in the Hi

Merry Chri

Nicholas dedicated his life to God's work, using his whole inheritance to serve the poor and suffering. As the Bishop of Myra, he attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325 (Bet you didn't know that about Santa Claus!). Nicholas' generosity and compassion were widely known, as you might imagine from the abiding legends of secret gifts. When these stories came to North America with the large waves of European immigration, they evolved to describe someone more akin to a northern European elf than a Middle Eastern bishop. Saint Nicholas became Santa Claus and joined the ranks of popular culture.

The feast day of Saint Nicholas falls on December 6 and it is widely celebrated in Europe today. My husband and I experienced this ourselves when we spent our first married Christmas in the Netherlands with his aunts and uncles. We brought presents for each other hidden away in our suitcases waiting for the right moment. It didn't come on Christmas eve. Or Christmas morning. Nor at Christmas lunch or supper. It was late at night on December 25 when we tucked into bed together and swapped parcels trying to keep the sounds of tearing wrapping paper to a minimum. It seemed that the family present exchange had happened weeks before on Sinterklaas Day.

I love this idea. Giving presents early in December as part of Advent would help to emphasize Christ, rather than consumption, as the centre of Christmas. It would also honour a role model of the faith and teach my family a bit more about the heritage of Christian compassion. And while I'm not sure that I am ready to rework my larger family traditions surrounding the holiday, celebrating Sinterklaas intentionally will help my smaller family unit to consider why we are exchanging gifts in the first place.

Gifts and Gifting

Sunday School curricula often suggest sharing a birthday cake sometime near

est for the gift of light.

mas to all.

Christmas. It seems like a cute suggestion. Kids love cake and the party atmosphere seems to go well with the festive season. But it always feels a little awkward. Yes, it is Jesus' birthday, but aren't we getting gifts? How do we reconcile this uncomfortable skip in logic? Perhaps a better emphasis would be to look at the nature of Jesus as gift—that God's love in covenant and incarnation is a gift to humanity. God joins with us, born as flesh among us, and so we too can live as gifts. This can be explained to young children as they are constantly at work, learning how to share and care for others. God's involving love frees us

Colouring pages featured in this article can be downloaded to use in your congregations and homes from the St. Nicholas Center, www.stnicholascenter.org.

A St Nicholas Story:

"One story tells of a poor man with three daughters. In those days, a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance that a young woman would find a good husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. This poor man's daughters, without dowries, were therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home—providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols for St. Nicholas. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver."

Printed with permission from: www.stnicholascenter.org

from our selfishness. Because of God's love in our lives, we are able to share love, be it in the form of time, money, ideas, or Lego sets.

Gift giving and festivities at this time of year obviously are not unique to our faith. Many communities celebrate newness and light in this darkest time of the year. In their schools and daycares, our children learn about different traditions and holidays. This is part of the wealth of human imagination—there are so many ways to reach for God. And, while being confident in our faith in Christ, we can still share and enjoy the cultural expressions of faith and religion with those around us because God is the God of all peoples. I believe that the light from the manger is the light that shines in all places as people reach for God. At this dark time of year, the words of the Gospel of John ring out:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.
>
> John 1:1–4 (NRSV)

Glory to God in the Highest for the gift of light. Merry Christmas to all.

If you would be interested in more information about Sinterklaas, St. Nicholas and the origins of Santa Claus, there are wonderful resources to be found at www.stnicholascenter.org. It has material for children, as well as adults: stories, images, printable colouring pages, craft ideas, and online games. I think that culturally savvy (i.e., critical) teenagers will find the information about Coca-Cola specifically fascinating.

Also, see a review of the children's book, Saint Nicholas—The Real Story of the Christmas Legend, *on page 37 in this edition of* Glad Tidings.

Advent Reflections

The Season That Brings Us ... *HOPE*

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Matthew 3:1–3 (NRSV)

What is Advent? I researched the word and found that the dictionary defines the word as the arrival or coming of something or someone special, and specifically, "a penitential season beginning four Sundays before Christmas."

The traditions of Advent are coming back, not only in the church but also to many homes.

How appropriate it is to have the Advent season. Its focus on repentance gives balance and perspective to the glow with which we anticipate the approach of Christmas and the coming of Christ. On the first, second, and fourth Sundays preceeding Christmas, the custom is to light the purple candles of repentance. The pink candle of joy is lit on the third Sunday, and on Christmas Day, we light the white candle, representing Christ. (A more recent practice is to simply name the first four candles *hope, peace, joy,* and *love*.)

This year, once again, let us come and repent as we, as Christians, travel toward the celebration of Christmas.

ctions

by Anne Russell

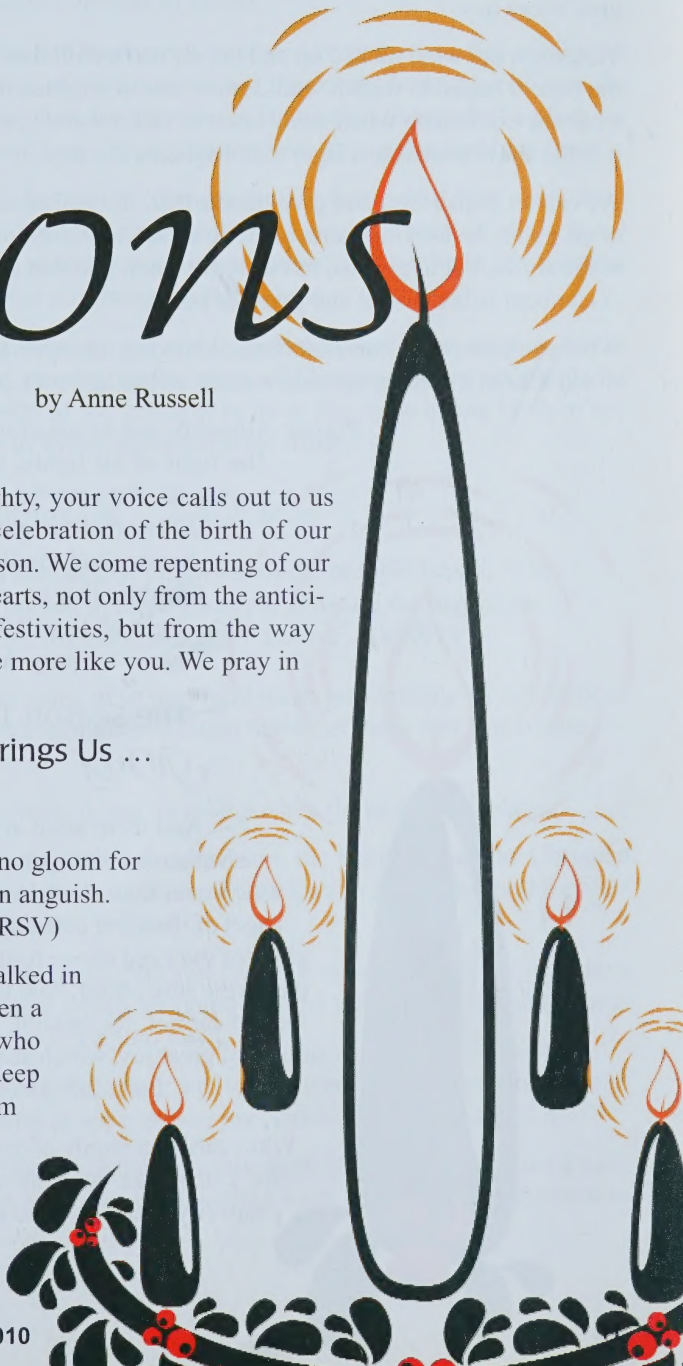
Prayer: Lord God almighty, your voice calls out to us as we approach the celebration of the birth of our Saviour, Christ, your son. We come repenting of our sin, with joy in our hearts, not only from the anticipation of Christmas festivities, but from the way you call us to become more like you. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

The Season That Brings Us …

PEACE

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish.
Isaiah 9:1a (NRSV)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
Isaiah 9:2 (NRSV)



Winter in the North brings a lack of light. The days are shortened and the skies are grey every day.

Yesterday, the wind picked up and the air had a chill that seemed to pierce right to the bone. I began to wish it would snow just to brighten the day. I find that there is a certain excitement when snow starts to fall. I wasn't certain why until I realized it is the snow's reflective light that brightens the day.

We can all praise God and give thanks that, in bleakness, there is light—the light of all lights, Jesus. God came in the flesh at Christmastime, not only to bring light to the world, but to give us, in this light, a new life that generates excitement. This excitement fills our soul and gives us peace.

What excitement we can experience knowing this special light that came into the world. Christ's coming spreads warmth as the light of Christ dawns in our hearts!

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting Father, who gave to us the light of all lights, we come to you to give thanks for your Son, born at Christmastime. Where there is gloom and chill, warm our hearts, and kindle anew our spirits from within, that we may have new life in the light of Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen.

The Season That Brings Us ...

JOY

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
Luke 2:8–10 (KJV)

While raising a family of our own, we used to prepare for Christmas in many ways. Best of all was a nativity scene given to us years before. With our

two children at my side, we would unfold the packaging. First was the stable that held the light that represented the Star of David.

Inside were the figures that had been carefully stored away the year before. One by one, we took them out and as we reconstructed the scene, I told the children the Christmas story: how Mary and Joseph came to Bethlehem in search of a place for Mary to have her baby, and how she laid him in a manger and called him Jesus.

Many years have passed, but the children, now with families of their own, have never forgotten that time we spent together. It was special—most of all for me. I love these memories of the teaching tools that were special in our home at Christmas and that helped us make the pilgrimage to Bethlehem.

Prayer: Dear Lord, as we come to you at this special time of year, we give thanks for time spent in love, passing on the story of Christmas to our children. We thank you for memories of joy brought to us at this time of the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

The Season That Brings Us ... *LOVE*

> As it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Luke 3:4 (NRSV)

Throughout this past year, many of us may have made preparations for celebrations like weddings or anniversaries and have found that all of these took much time and effort.

Though we might call it work, it was awesome when the event took place.

As we now advance into another Advent season, the beginning of the Christian church year, we come with the same sense of anticipation as we had for the events for which we worked so hard to prepare.

Beyond our personal events in the past year, we now come together in God's love to prepare ourselves for that which was predicted by the prophet Isaiah and was fulfilled in the birth of God's Son into this world.

As we prepare for Christmas Day, may we look forward to the awesome event of Jesus' birth—of his coming in hope, peace, joy, and in the love of God.

Prayer: Dear Lord, as we approach the day of the birth of your Son, Jesus the Christ, prepare our hearts and minds for the awesome work that lies ahead. Cleanse us

from all sin, that we might be blessed in sharing this time of preparation with those who might not know Jesus as their Saviour. In His name, we pray. Amen.

God Sent the Light ...*for us to see*

> Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." John 8:12 (NRSV)

It was Christmas Eve when we entered the church and we were all given a candle. When the time came, the Christ candle was lit and the lights of the sanctuary were dimmed. From that one candle, the light was passed from one person to another, until all the candles were lit. The whole sanctuary became illuminated and provided us with an illustration of the magnificent light of Christ in the world.

Unfortunately, the darkness continues to haunt us. War has taken loved ones and military personnel are serving their countries in foreign lands, far away from home. Many will celebrate by gathering together, but others will be unable to, missing out on this joyous tradition. The darkness can be very deep, but the good news is that light always overcomes darkness. That's why Jesus is the light of the world.

> "I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you face persecution. But take courage: I have conquered the world!" John 16:33 (NRSV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, be close to us this day as we come to you giving thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate. We pray for peace in the world through him, and for peace in our hearts through him. Let the *Hope, Peace, Joy,* and *Love* that you sent to us at Christmas time be our joy everlasting. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Anne Russell lives in Brampton, Ontario, and is the author of two devotional books.

The Great ADVENTure

by Susan Naylor

During Advent, it becomes obvious that we are "in the world and not of it." The season of Christmas has taken over the month of December. We celebrate Christmas for at least a month before we actually get to Christmas day. When I lived in the Arctic, I had a different experience. In the Arctic, Advent was a time of preparation for the twelve-day celebration of Christmas that actually started on December 25. It felt right to prepare for the celebration of Christmas. Reclaiming the season of Advent is something that all of us can do. Reclaiming it together as a church family can help each of us enter into Christmas prepared to truly celebrate.

A few years ago, after ten years of ministry in one congregation, I found myself at a new church in a university town. At my former church, an Advent Afternoon was a longstanding tradition. Beautiful wreaths were made to decorate the church; each family could make an Advent wreath with fresh greenery to take home; wooden mangers were made with drills and saws: ceramics were painted: and candles were rolled. It was a wonderful way to mark the beginning of a new season in the church year, but I knew it wasn't a good fit for the new congregation.

As we were talking about how to gather our church family together to experience something of Advent, we realised that the team that usually decorated the church for Christmas was pretty tired. From those conversations, the idea for a congregational event called, "The Great ADVENTure" began to take form.

Three university students were recruited to figure out how to design an evening that would help our congregation gain a better understanding of Advent and would also deal with the practical matters of preparing the church building

for Christmas. They came up with a plan for a community supper of home-made soup, make-your-own subs, and cookies. They made a shopping list and recruited the Ladies Group to make the soup. The church provided a small budget for the food and supplies for the evening.

Advertising took place in the church newsletter, the Sunday bulletin, and through the email list. While people weren't all that sure about what would happen, there was enthusiasm for getting together on a Friday evening without the obligations of arriving at a certain time or having to prepare supper ahead of time. Some came straight from work and met the rest of their family there. Some were early and some were late, but having a flexible supper to start the evening really helped to make everyone feel welcome.

> It was great to see all the generations working together.

After supper, the options for the evening were listed and teams were formed. It was great to see all the generations working together. Christmas trees were hauled from the attic and decorated beautifully. Angels were coloured and hung on a tree for the annual program supporting local shelters. Holes were punched in offering envelopes and hung on a tree for those who were supporting the building of a church in Bessi, Cameroon. The church Advent wreath was set up and the nativity display was unwrapped. Each activity had a team leader who guided the team's work. Of course, the job that everyone wanted was to decorate the cookies! (They were tasty.)

At the end of the evening, we gathered in the choir pews to have a time of worship. We sang and prayed and thought about how we use our time during Advent to enter into the Christmas story. It was a bit chaotic and pretty loud, not really the quiet reflection I had had in mind, but it was a meaningful time together. The Advent calendars and daily reading booklets that were given out were a good tie to our Christian practice at home.

The Great ADVENTure was a great event that helped the congregation share in the beginning of Advent and it provided a healthy context for fellowship. It was a positive experience for the university students, who were able to contribute to the church. Many enjoyed the fact that the work of decorating the church, setting up the Christmas mission projects, and generally getting things ready for Christmas was shared by so many. I've heard it said that if you do something twice it becomes a tradition. That must be true in this case as The Great ADVENTure now marks the beginning of Advent every year.

Susan Naylor served Presbyterian congregations in Summerside and Fredericton and currently serves as Youth Ministry Coordinator for the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Consider Hosting Your Own Great ADVENTure!

Remember to plan well and advertise early since families are often busy in early December. Perhaps your WMS group might be the planning team for your own event, or you might put together an intergenerational planning team, or a team of youth and young adults.

Consider beginning your evening with a simple dinner of soup and bread and remember to end early if you are inviting children. You will need a few different stations for individuals to choose from, and consider activities that can work for many different ages. As well, it is good to ask someone to lead each station to keep the group on task!

Don't forget to close your time together with a prayer, a short scripture reading, and a song or two.

Here are a few stations that you might consider for your own Great ADVENTure:

Make a banner for Advent

Make a banner that young and old can contribute too! Have everyone make a hand-print out of green felt that can be put together to make a circle wreath. Perhaps, have everyone make a footprint that can symbolize the journey to Bethlehem. Also, banners don't always have to be made of fabric—consider using foam board or even construction paper.

Decorate Christmas cookies

Decorate Christmas cookies that can be eaten that night, sent home with families, sold as a fundraiser for a local charity, or donated to a local shelter. Who doesn't love decorating cookies?

Decorate your church

Before you decorate, look into the meaning of our modern decorations. Many have a Christian story behind the decoration. For example, the evergreen tree, because it stays green in winter, can symbolize everlasting life. Prepare a sheet that families can take home to learn more about the decorations in your church, and in their homes.

Advent wreath making

Buy a Styrofoam ring and make four small holes for the candles. Decorate with evergreen twigs, or artificial greens. Place three candles around the outside (three purple and one pink), and one white candle in the centre in a candle holder. Provide each family with a candle lighting liturgy to take home. The Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D) advent liturgies are great and educate about mission!

Learn more about Saint Nicholas

Find a story book that tells about Saint Nicholas. Consider having some opportunities for people in attendance to emulate his generosity through their actions. The needs of each community are different, but you could consider:

- Making a mitten tree—mitten ornaments are cut out and as people bring in mittens or hats for a local shelter, they hang a mitten ornament on the tree.
- An alternative Christmas giving table could be set up to let individuals know about charities that they could make a donation to as a gift to an individual. Consider projects from Something Extra (http://www.presbyterian.ca/donate/giftsofchange) or either of the two new WMS *Together We Can!* projects. Both will provide gift cards to acknowledge the gift.
- Have a fair trade sale. Sell fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate, jewellery, or handicrafts at your event.

Make decorations for a Jesse tree

A Jesse tree is a special tree that is used during Advent to teach the story of salvation. Traditionally, the decorations are white, sometimes with gold or silver trim. Each decoration represents a biblical story—for example, a dove for Noah, a scallop shell for John the Baptist, and a lily for Mary. A simple search on the Internet will give you the information you need to add a Jesse tree to your congregation's Advent celebrations. You can even make one out of Bristol board to send home with families.

Costume making

Do you have a Christmas pageant? Are the costumes getting old? Consider having some crafty types come together to help make new costumes for the Christmas pageant.

Make Christmas cards

Make Christmas cards that can be sent to church members who are not able to get out during the Christmas season. Also cards could be written and sent to overseas mission staff. Their names and addresses can be found on page 44 of this month's *Glad Tidings*.

President's Itinerary
Joan Smith

November 8–10
Life & Mission Agency Meeting, Crieff Hills ON

November 14–16
WMS Council Executive Meeting, Toronto ON

November 20–December 1
Taiwan

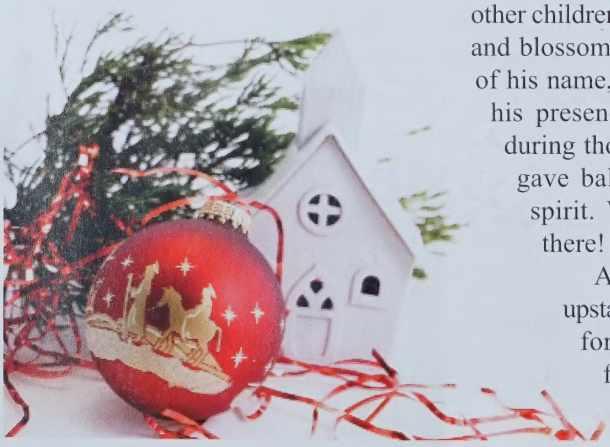
My Prophet

by Audrey Cameron

It was a night I was dreading. It was not a night that I expected to meet a teacher, a prophet. I certainly did not expect to meet one wearing OshKosh overalls!

It was the third week of Advent, the week of Joy, and I was heading to a turkey dinner for the church and community. It was a time of celebration as the congregation was offering hospitality to all. I was not feeling very joyful or hospitable. I peeled apples for the dessert, wiping my tears away with a dish cloth. I was heading to share a meal with people I loved dearly, who had handed me a big disappointment.

Earlier in the Advent season, leadership in the congregation had decided to address budgetary concerns by terminating my position as youth minister. I was devastated. Not because I worried for my own future (that came later), but that a community I had so much hope for, had with one vote, said goodbye to their outreach to youth. I made my way uncertain of how to celebrate when all my heart could do was weep.



The place was packed with people in the holiday mood. Most in the congregation did not know the change was about to happen. They had not received "the" letter. Laughter and music filled any space not already occupied by the wonderful aromas coming from the kitchen. With the rod of activity to support me, the staff of my mentors beside me, and sheer determination, I wept not. Then he arrived—with hugs and delight, I picked up my two-year-old nephew, Nicholas, in my arms. His delight to be at a party was obvious. He danced to the music, laughed at the other children, admired the decorations, and blossomed with the very mention of his name, the acknowledgement of his presence. I thanked God often during those moments, as Nicholas gave balm to the wounds of my spirit. What a gift to have him there! A child brought joy!

As the meal finished, I went upstairs to prepare the sanctuary for the worship that was to follow. It was wonderful to be able to light candles and

arrange papers and have that moment to collect myself again. Nicholas came with me. His attention was quickly taken with a little display, traditionally set aside in the side foyer. A little white church with a light inside sat on a table, eye level for all children to see. Around it were tiny figures of children and adults, all nestled on a bed of cotton snow! Like many before him, the display fascinated Nicholas. As I went into the sanctuary to make worship preparations, I left him perched on a chair by the little church, his chin rested on his elbows in the snow, his eyes fixed on the community that was before him. "Be gentle," I warned.

It wasn't long before I heard the call: "Come twick, we have a problem," the little two-year-old voice shouted. I ran, expecting to see the display in pieces. Instead, I found Nick still looking in with his head in his hands. With his next words, I knew I was in the presence of a prophet. "We have a problem. There are no doors. The kids cannot get in." He was very upset. Earlier, he had obviously expressed his delight at being in the church. How important it was to this little one that the little fold of the Christmas display could not get into the church, that building filled with light.

As the community gathered for worship that evening, they had to walk by Nicholas who told everyone the "problem." Some understood his two-year-old accent immediately and were amused. Some had to have interpretation and were amused. Some understood him and understood the message, "We have a problem, the kids cannot get in!" Leaders knew the decision that had been made in the weeks earlier was challenged by the words of a two-year-old.

That night, and often since, I have thought of Nicholas' words. I have prayed to be a door that allows kids to come into the light. I have prayed for little churches, that sit so prettily in their place of tradition, that a door of people, worship, hospitality, or programs would be found for those gathered around the steps. Somehow, in the midst of all the emotion of that week in Advent, the voice of a two-year-old spoke. It was the words that began the long climb for me from the mire of disappointment to the soil of prayer. Will the kids be able to get in?

The life of Nicholas continues to teach me. As he sat on my shoulders watching fireworks the other night, he ooed and awed, marvelling as he told me, "I knew I'd like them. Trader told me. He was in them, you know." I laughed—Trader, his imaginary friend, who shows up in all encounters of beauty and ugliness in this young one's life. Trader knows everything about everyone. Trader fixes things, plays with toys, finds people, and shares secrets. Trader does the seemingly impossible with ease. Trader died and came back to life twice this year, as Nicholas watched me grieve over the death of two friends. Trader pulls trucks out of ditches and bakes wonderful cookies. Nicholas always mentions Trader when

Let no one despise you youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12 (NRSV)

life is mysterious. "Trader told me." is a common sentence in Nicholas' life.

As I listened to Nicholas talk about his friend the other night, it occurred to me that Trader is a lot like the Hoy Spirit. He is always present, giving knowledge and peace to the journey. Somehow now, when Nicholas speaks of Trader, I feel that I know him too. I just know him by another name. I long to be able to know him as well as Nicholas does.

Nicholas' words of last Advent have gained even deeper meaning for me today. Picking up our denomination's national magazine, Nicholas was excited. The painting, "Calvary" by Mexican artist Octavio Ocampo, graced the cover. "Look at this. It's a book with God in it. And can you believe it, he's a grown-up!"

It is no wonder he was worried that the kids could not get into the church. It is no wonder his unseen friend is so happy to see fireworks and bake cookies. In that moment, I understood that Nicholas and his God are childhood friends. Nicholas knows God as a child. As a child, Nicholas knows God!

I look forward to what my young prophet in OshKosh overalls will continue to teach me. Nevertheless, if nothing else, I know I will never enter a church without looking for the doors for the kids to get in. If nothing else, I will never stop praying for the Church to be a door. If nothing else, I will never stop believing that there is One who is constant, doing the impossible, present in all situations. If nothing else, I will always know the intimacy of God's friendship with a child. I would not trade that knowledge for anything.

Bless you, my young prophet for speaking words. You didn't even know their power. Or did you? Bless you, young teacher, for calling on a friend you cannot see. Or can you?

Bless you, Holy One, who is the Door and the Everlasting Friend!

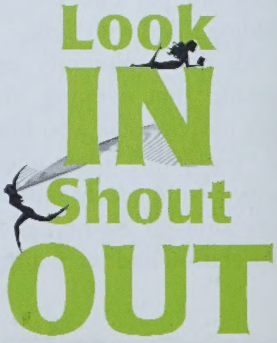
DATE: May 20-23, 2011

PLACE: Sheraton Parkway Hotel,
Richmond Hill (GTA), Ontario

REGISTRATION FEES:
$325 before November 15, 2010
$425 before March 31, 2011
Family Rate: $50.00 off per person (18 years and over)

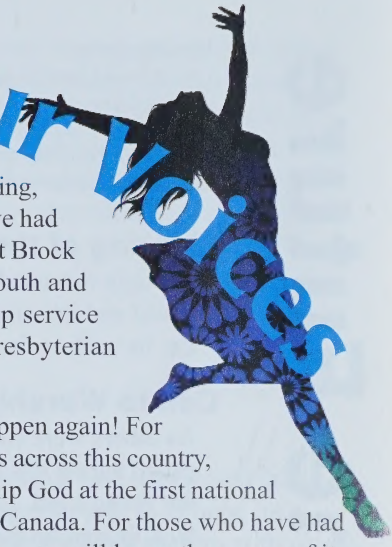
INQUIRIES:
skim@presbyterian.ca
(416) 441-1111 OR 1-800-619-7301 Extension 321

For more information visit: www.womensgathering.ca



Raising Our Voices

by Colleen Wood



I will never forget July 4, 2010. After years of dreaming, followed by years of planning and lots of prayers, we had made it. I walked into the Sean O'Sullivan Theatre at Brock University, along with a community of over 700 youth and leaders, to worship God. This was the first worship service of the first national youth conference of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This was exciting!

On May 20, 2011, something exciting is about to happen again! For on May 20, 2011, women from Presbyterian churches across this country, along with international guests, will gather to worship God at the first national Women's Gathering of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. For those who have had the privilege to worship in such large groups before, you will know the power of it.

What can you expect from the worship at The Women's Gathering? You can expect to:

- Raise your voice, along with hundreds more, in praise to God.
- Have your faith deepened through powerful preaching.
- Learn some new songs and sing out loudly to some old favourites.
- Be inspired from stories of mission in Canada and around the world.
- Hear the word of God in new and traditional ways.
- Be transformed as you look in.
- Leave with a message you want to shout out to the world.

Our worship leadership includes:

- The Rev. Glen Soderholm as praise leader. Glen is a vibrant leader who is well known across The Presbyterian Church in Canada as a singer, song-writer, minister, and worship leader.
- The Rev. Paulette Brown is our preacher. Paulette is the Director of the Flemingdon Gateway Mission After School Program in the Presbytery of East Toronto— ministry aimed at enabling leadership, resilience, and hope in children and youth in the Flemingdon Park neighbourhood of Toronto.

Many of you have given our young people amazing experiences before by sending them, with prayers and money, to events such as Canada Youth. Now it's your turn. Share the excitement. Raise your voice and worship God.

Don't miss the early bird registration rate. Register by November 15th!

Leaning into the Future

by Joan Masterton

Worship notes:
-An order of service is provided and can be copied for all participants.
-The lighting of the Christ candle is included in this worship service. A simple white candle is perfect for this.
-Depending on your group, you can have several readers for this worship service, or one reader who does all the readings.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

We light this candle to remind us that Jesus Christ came into the world and into our lives bringing gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love. Let us walk in the light of the Lord. (A candle is lit.)

Call to Worship

As others were called by God to witness Jesus' birth, so too we are called during this Christmas season to come, bow down, and worship the living Lord. Let us remember the past, consider the present, and look forward to the future with confidence in Christ's eternal presence. Let us worship God.

Hymn: Hope is a star (119)

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Faith

Let us pray. God of the past, the present, and the future, you came to us to draw us closer to you. We confess that we have not always welcomed you for we live casual lives, ignoring your promises. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbours, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace.

In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to invite you into our lives, to seek your guidance in all things, and to be obedient to your Word. Amen.

Hear the good news! God *loves* us; God always has and God always will love us, for God *is* love. *Know* that we are forgiven and be at peace.

Opening reflection

In our culture, secular, North American and 21st century as it is, we have no trouble remembering that Christmas approaches. Our homes, our public places, our radios, and televisions declare the good news shortly after Thanksgiving and continue well into January. The word "Christmas" may be replaced much of the time by "holiday," but followers of Jesus Christ know who they worship and why we acknowledge and celebrate the birth of our Lord.

The time leading up to the *first* Christmas, however, was almost totally void of any notice of impending divine intervention. For hundreds of years, God's chosen people had sought and been promised a saviour and so their hopes lay on future redemption. When God did intervene, God did so in the lives of totally unsuspecting individuals, who may have been astounded at the course of events about to unfold, but who nevertheless swallowed their fear, let go of the past, and embraced God's promised future.

Hymn: People in darkness (124)

Isaiah

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2–7

Reflection

Many centuries before the birth of Jesus, the people of God anticipated the Lord's intervention in their lives. The prophet Isaiah upheld their hope for a saviour, someone who would alleviate their suffering and bless them with peace, justice, and joy. We too experience anxiety about our world, the violence that it contains, and the fear that seems to undermine all our human efforts to end war, share resources fairly, and live respectfully in God's creation. As we look back, we see the despair of the people turning with Isaiah's eyes toward the future and the hope that it offers in the birth of a child born for us.

Wonderful counsellor, we release our anxieties onto your shoulders, and with Christmas hope, seek our future in your wisdom.

Mary

Scripture: Luke 1:46–55

Reflection

In a day when girls married young and

become mothers, Mary is even younger, and unmarried. Yet she places total trust in God and expresses her joy and gratitude in prayer and praise, unafraid of how others might respond or of the pain that lies ahead. Mary remembers the voices of the prophets of the past and is amazed that God will fulfill promises made to her ancestors through her.

Mighty God, remind us that we too are vehicles for bringing about your kingdom in our time. Help us to say "yes!" to your call to us today, each in our own personal circumstances. Let us embrace the present as we celebrate the birth of new life in you.

Hymn: The hands that first held Mary's child (158, sung to the tune of 148)

Joseph

Scripture: Matthew 1:18–25

Reflection

What courage it must have taken for Joseph to accept what seemed to be impossible, and to let go of cultural norms and embrace the unknown. Filled with love—agape, philia *and* eros—Joseph, the carpenter, refused to bend to societal pressures to abandon Mary, and placed all his faith in God and in the promise of a newborn saviour. In obedience to God's call, Joseph assumed new responsibilities he had never anticipated.

Everlasting Creator, you have nurtured us all the days of our lives. Help us, especially at this time of Christmas celebration, to separate your call to us from the cultural imperatives of our society, and to be obedient to your will. Give us courage to make uncomfortable decisions and to express our total confidence as your disciples in your promises.

Elizabeth and Zechariah

Scripture: Luke 1:5–7, 24–25, 39–45

Reflection

When the number of days ahead seem insufficient and the days behind lengthen, we have a tendency to think "we've seen it all." In life with God, however, there is no such thing as "retirement," and both Elizabeth and Zechariah rejoiced anew in anticipation of the future. There is no limit to the surprises God has in store for us, and we can live out the days of our lives with wonder and joy. As the beginning of new life approached, and God's promises were fulfilled, Elizabeth and Zechariah realized that so much more lay ahead.

Prince of Peace, we give thanks and praise your many names for the unknown and unwritten future with which you have blessed us. Help us to lean into that future, remembering that you have promised to walk with us every step of the way. As we celebrate the birth of the Christ child, fill us with your Spirit and may the wonder and joy and peace that we experience be shared with all.

Concluding Word

God has prepared for us things beyond our imagining. Our hope is for a renewed world and for fullness of life, now and in the future. As Jesus taught us, we pray for life immersed in God. Life had its beginning in God. In God it will come to completion and its meaning be fully revealed. All creation will find fulfillment in God. Christ will come again. Only God knows when and how our Lord will return. Now we see in part. Then we shall see face to face.

Come, Lord Jesus!

Hymn: Tomorrow Christ is coming (131, sung to the tune of 742)

Benediction

Order of Service
Leaning into the Future

Musical Prelude

Lighting of the Christ Candle and Call to Worship

Hymn: Hope is a star (119)

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Faith

Opening Reflection

Hymn: People in darkness (124)

Isaiah:
Scripture: Isaiah 9:2–7 and Reflection

Mary:
Scripture: Luke 1:46–55 and Reflection

Hymn: The hands that first held Mary's child (158, sung to the tune of 148)

Joseph:
Scripture: Matthew 1:18–25 and Reflection

Elizabeth and Zechariah:
Scripture: Luke 1:5–7, 24–25, 39–45 and Reflection

Concluding Word

Hymn: Tomorrow Christ is coming (131, sung to the tune of 742)

Benediction

Postlude

The image of home that springs to mind for many of us is the place we live or the one that holds particularly happy memories. Maybe it is a family cottage or the place where special occasions are celebrated. A true home is a refuge from everyday concerns.

But do we appreciate home? Imagine losing that place of comfort, knowing that your government or others wished you or your loved ones harm? What if there is no peace, no security, and no hope at home? This is what refugees feel and what drives them to uproot themselves and flee.

Refugees know that home is about safety—the right to claim asylum if you fear persecution or threats to your life. These truths motivate the staff, volunteers, law and social work students of Action Réfugiés Montréal (ARM) to assist people being held in the immigration detention centre in Laval, Quebec. ARM offers legal assistance, psychosocial and pastoral support to the men, women, and children held in this former prison. Explaining a complex legal refugee process, help finding lawyers, and listening to their concerns and fears is part of the daily work.

There are costs to building a safe home. For example, the first step is often securing identification documents. A phone card can be the simple key that can unlock the door to their new home by providing the abilty to make the necessary calls to secure these documents.

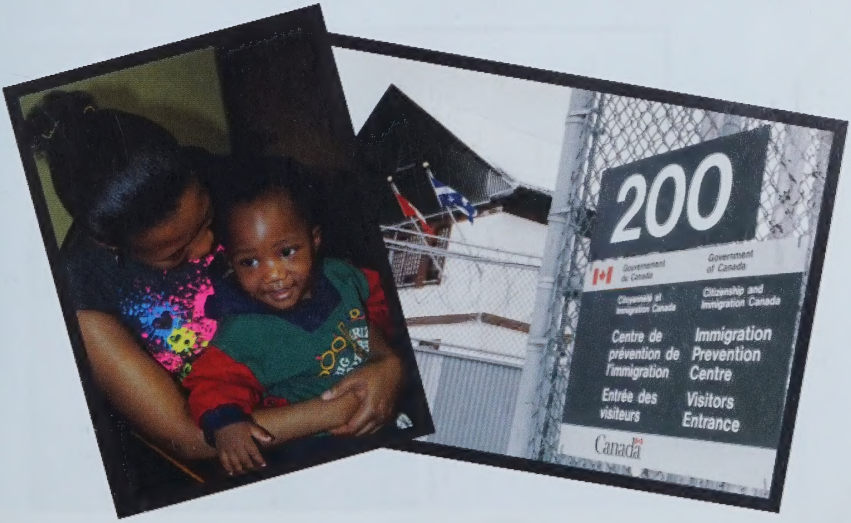
How can you help build a home in Canada for a refugee who is detained?

$40: Buys one month of phone cards

$125: Pays for staff and volunteer transportation costs to the centre for one month

$200: Offers the gift of learning and connection to home by purchasing books and newspapers

$250: Hosts a Christmas or Easter celebration and worship service



GAZA CLINICS PROJECT

The Gaza Strip, described as 'the world's largest open air prison,' is home to 750 000 children. They are innocent victims of the latest phase of the sixty year struggle between Israelis and Palestinians.

Despite the massive international aid channeled through the United Nations, official estimates are that almost 50% of Gaza's children are anemic, 60% suffer from parasites, and a growing number are malnourished.

For more than thirty years, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has supported a Christian witness in the Gaza Strip by providing medical assistance to the women and young children in Gaza. The program, run by the Near East Council of Churches (NECC), operates three neighbourhood clinics offering care to expectant mothers, and treatment and nutritional supplements to children under six years of age. They send health workers into densely crowded refugee camps to assist mothers with their babies. In 2009, they treated 14 500 children.In 2009, they treated 14,500 children.

Gaza Clinics Project

Local Christians (two of them women) make up the Board of NECC and direct the work. Over the decades, the Gazan people, overwhelmingly Muslim, have come to respect the integrity and dedication of their Christian neighbours.

This project is not about taking sides. It is about helping mothers and their young children. We long for the day a just and lasting peace will come to the Middle East, but while we wait and pray, we must not let these children suffer. Your gift will send a message of hope and concern to the children and their mothers.

How can you help mothers and their children in the Gaza Strip?

Donations

$10 Pays for the medication of an anemic child

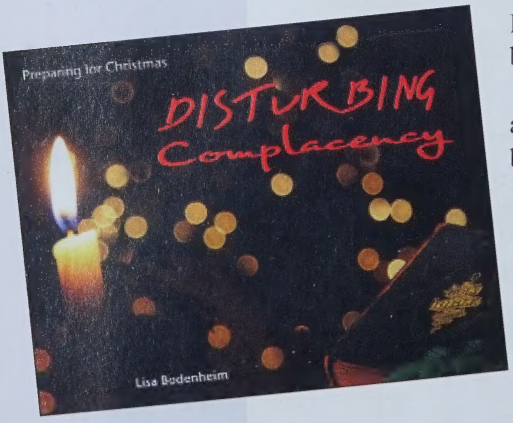
$20 Covers the costs of a home visit by a health worker

$25 Covers a routine visit to a clinic

Christmas Books for Adults

Disturbing Complacency—Preparing for Christmas
by Lisa Bodenheim

This book surprised me a little. It is a book from the Iona Community and I have used several of their resources in the past. I found this book a little more startling than some of their past resources. This isn't to say I didn't like it, but often I find their resources bring me to peace. This one, made me think! I should have been prepared for this when the back cover read, "*Disturbing Complacency* does not advocate a 'cosy' view of Christmas but rather urges people to use this season to address some of the most important issues of our time." Even the title should have tipped me off, but all I thought was 'Christmas'.

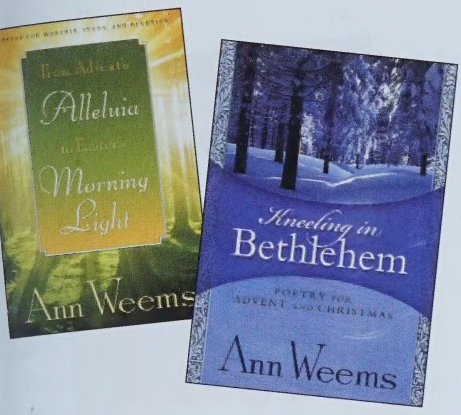


The book provides a daily reading for each day of Advent and begins by providing a challenging quote from well-known Christians, such as Jurgen Moltmann, J. Philip Newell, Elizabeth A. Johnson, and John L. Bell. This is followed by a scripture reading and a reflection. Some of the challenging issues you will consider are power, money, culture, and images of God. This book may disturb or anger you, but it may also make you think. Perhaps at Christmas, we reach for the 'cosy', but perhaps in our preparations this year, we should consider something that will make us think and might even make us change.

Kneeling in Bethlehem—Poetry for Advent and Christmas
From Advent's Alleluia to Easter's Morning Light
by Ann Weems

Kneeling in Bethlehem would make a nice addition to your Christmas celebrations and could be used in a variety of contexts. From worship service to WMS meetings, reading at your dinner table with friends, or in private reflection, Ann's poems will help you reflect on the meaning of Christmas.

From Advent's Alleluia to Easter's Morning Light is perfect if



you are looking for poetry that you can use over the next several months, even throughout the year.

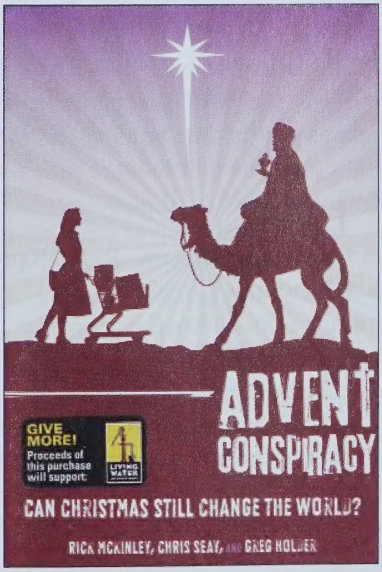
Weems has a contemporary writing style that shows her faith, and encourages others in their faith journey. Both books are books that you will return to year after year!

Advent Conspiracy—Can Christmas still change the world?
by Rick McKinley, Chris Seay, and Greg Holder

I discovered the Advent Conspiracy last year through their website. The Advent Conspiracy is a movement with the goal of replacing the consumerism of Christmas with compassion. I do like what they have to say—that Christmas has become too busy, too stressful, and too filled with stuff! The Advent Conspiracy embraces four concepts in their quest for a more compassionate Christmas:

Worship Fully
Spend Less
Give More
Love All.

This book is quite blunt about our love of money and our Christmas consumerism. It reflects on what makes consumerism work and reminds us that our inexpensive goods often come at a much greater cost. This is a hard concept and I know how difficult it can be with children. They want much of what they see and this is even worse if they are television viewers. Though, I also know of families that have reduced their presents at Christmas, or opted for more handmade gifts with great results. We do try to give 'events' as presents to some friends—a pedicure or a movie night—and it has been great. It still costs money, but at least it is just not one more thing to clean up and send to the landfill in a few years. This book might encourage me to do even more of that and to come up with lower cost



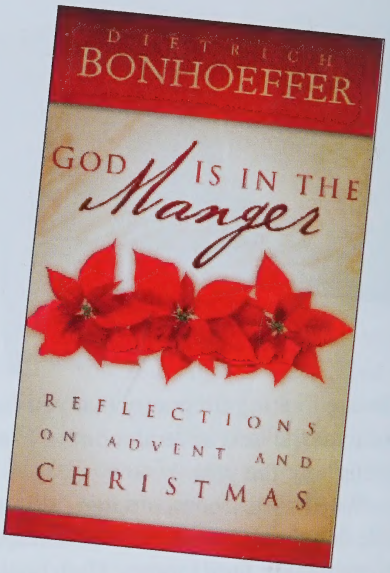
options—a video night at our home or a skating afternoon at an outdoor pond.

I was concerned about the 'Give More' chapter and they even acknowledge that many will be apprehensive about this chapter. How many of us have anything left to give at Christmas? However, this movement is still asking us to give more, though perhaps we will have more to give if we are not running around looking for the perfect gift! It does encourage us to make time for others. And truly, this is where I want to spend my Christmas—with my family and friends—not making perfect cookies for others, but messing around in the kitchen having fun with others. I don't want to be going to every professional Christmas production, but acting out Christmas skits at home with my children. And I certainly don't want to be spending time in the shopping malls!

The back of the book has a devotional guide to use with a separate DVD. Perhaps a little time reading this book might give you a little more time for a compassionate Christmas!

God is in the Manger—Reflections on Advent and Christmas
writings from Dietrich Bonhoeffer
translated by O.C. Dean Jr.
compiled and edited by Jana Riess

I am always amazed at how timeless the thoughts of Dietrich Bonhoeffer seem to be. *In God in the Manger*, I am especially struck by how relevant his thoughts are on Advent because so much of his life was a life in waiting. His life was short, yet his words live on in this and many of his books.



The daily devotions in this book each have a reflection from Bonhoeffer, a scripture to reflect on, and some bonus material. This would be a fairly traditional Advent devotional, but still one stirring enough to engage and inspire you as you prepare to celebrate Christ's birth.

The Book Room has many other books to help you celebrate Christmas and Advent. As well, it has a wonderful selection of Christmas cards, napkins, and writing papers. I have also noticed some lovely present ideas—fair trade ornaments and jewellery—a gift you can feel good about giving. If you are local, you can drop in. If not, they are just a phone call or an email away!

Christmas Books for Children

Every Day of Advent and Christmas —A Book of Activities for Children Year A
published by Liguori Publications

If you want to help a child celebrate Advent, and prepare for Christmas, this is the book for you! Throughout December, children will learn about Advent wreaths, hear biblical stories, consider ways to help others, and even add to a small Jesse tree as they remember the events of 'salvation history'. Activities include dot-to-dots, making ornaments, simple crossword puzzles, colouring, matching activities, mazes, and more—truly something for every child.

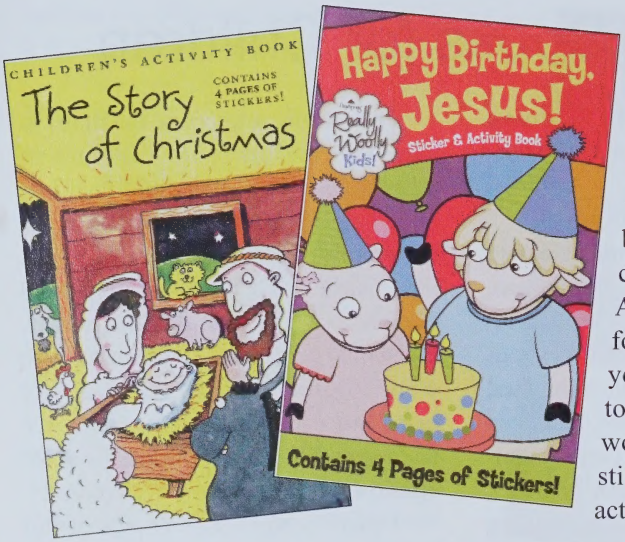
I especially appreciate the notes to adults on the first page that suggest what activities younger children might need help with and also provide a list of supplies (crayons, scissors, glue, etc.). Although a four-year-old would need help with some of the activities, this would be the perfect opportunity to work together with the child and to learn and share together. I expect even an eight-year-old or nine-year-old would enjoy most of the activities.

I plan to buy a few copies of this book to give as gifts to the important children in my life, but it would also be a great gift to Sunday school children on the first Sunday of Advent, or could even be used in a Sunday school setting.

Happy Birthday Jesus!—Children's Activity Book
The Story of Christmas—Children's Activity Book

These two books would make perfect stocking stuffers or small gifts for the children in your life. They would also be nice gifts that a WMS group might consider giving to the children of the church.

The Story of Christmas uses text, activity sheets, and colouring pages to tell the birth narrative. In *Happy Birthday Jesus*, the Woolly family, a delightful sheep family, has a birthday party to celebrate Jesus'

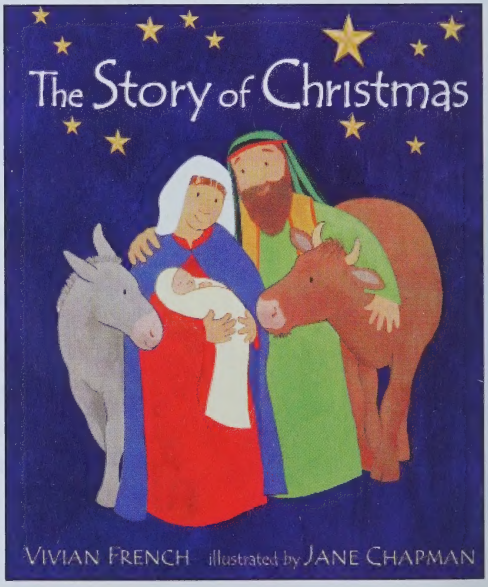


birth. Again, text, activity sheets, and colouring pages help to move the story along. Many of the activity sheets need some reading skills, so these books would be good for children ages five to nine. Also, both books include four sheets of stickers. If you are giving these books to younger children, they would enjoy the story, the stickers, and the colouring activities.

The Story of Christmas
by Vivan French
illustrated by Jane Chapman

This lovely board book is a simple retelling of the birth narrative. The sturdy pages would stand up to young children, who would also enjoy the bright colours and simple illustrations.

It would be a nice Christmas gift for children ages two to four.



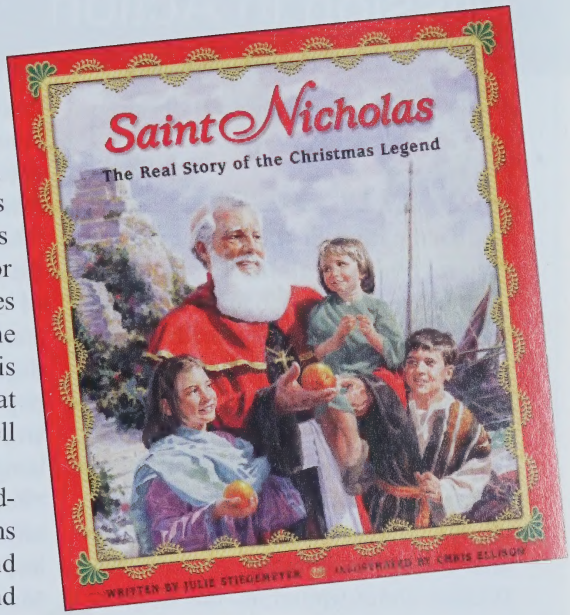
WMS PCC THE Book Room

The Book Roo
50 Wynford Driv
Toronto, ON M3C 1J
416-441-1111 800-619-730
bookroom@presbyterian.c

Saint Nicholas—The Real Story of the Christmas Legend
by Julie Stiegemeyer
illustrated by Chris Ellison

If you are trying to teach your children more about Saint Nicholas, this is a great place to start. This story is a story of generosity, as Saint Nicholas secretly helps a poor family by providing it with dowries for the three young daughters. The author does state that this story is "somewhat fictionalized," but that Saint Nicholas's generosity was well known.

This book would make a nice addition to your Christmas celebrations if you have young children and might just get them to think beyond our usual image of Santa Claus.



Give a Gift that Changes Lives

$35 provides vitamin-enriched food supplements to orphans

$95 provides a family with an ox plough to help harvest more food

Presbyterian World Service & Development

Order your free Gifts of Change catalogue from the Book Room today.
Call 1-800-619-7301 or visit www.presbyterian.ca/giftsofchange

Sidney Chang
Taiwan

The Dedication of the First Fruit of "Partnership in Mission"

"We would like to thank Hsin-hsing Presbyterian Church for their loving reception," said the Rev. Kaynwane R. Madarape, Moderator of Ngudra Drekay (Rukai) Presbytery. The Hsin-hsing Presbyterian Church of Tainan Presbytery is letting Drekay Presbytery (one of the indigenous presbyteries) use their old church building to establish a Drekay congregation in the City of Tainan. This allows the people of Ngudra Drekay tribe, who live or work in Tainan, to have a church of their own. On August 1, 2010, nearly 500 people witnessed the signing of this agreement by representatives of Hsin-hsing Presbyterian Church and Drekay Presbytery.

"Partnership in Mission" is one of the mission strategies of the PCT. Since 1965, there has been a steady population shift in Taiwan; people from the countryside have been migrating to big city centres, especially among indigenous people. Eighty per cent of indigenous people, aged 18–45, are living in the cities. Naturally, the tribal churches are affected. It also creates a pastoral concern for the indigenous people that live or work in the cities. Many of them, because of work schedules, cannot attend church. Some of them, because of language barriers and other reasons, stop attending Sunday worship. "Partnership in Mission" encourages the city churches to help provide places of worship for these indigenous Christians. By doing so, the city's indigenous Christians save on rental expenses and have a regular place for worship and fellowship. For the tribal congregations affected by the migration, "Partnership in Mission" encourages city churches to adopt a tribal church and support their ministry and finance. Many have done so and have enjoyed the fellowship between city and indigenous churches.

Hsin-hsing Presbyterian Church in Tainan had just built a new church. They are still carrying a mortgage of $26,000,000 TWD ($1 USD is about $32 TWD). Selling their old church building would lighten their mortgage considerably, but their minister, the Rev. Ker-shun Wu, and the session decided to use their old building for mission. Upon learning about "Partnership in Mission," they contacted the General Assembly Office to see if there was any group of people that could use their building. After some fervent prayers and consideration, they decided to let Drekay Presbytery establish a Drekay congregation in their old church building. It will be totally free for three

years. A church in Taipei, Liou-chang-li Presbyterian Church, hearing of the kindly deeds of Hsin-hsing church, offered to lend them $5 million TWD with no interest charges.

The Rev. Andrew T. C. Chang, General Secretary of the PCT, commended the spirit and generosity of the session and members of the Hsin-hsing church. "You have doubled your joy by sharing." He then told the congregation that they were an example to the whole church. This is the spirit of "Partnership in Mission." The Rev. Hon-tiong Lyim, one of the Assistant General Secretaries of the PCT stated that the PCT firmly believed in preserving the culture and language of the indigenous people. We promoted "Partnership in Mission" so that "the city's indigenous people still can worship in their mother tongues." The name of the new congregation is "Nan-kai," (Tai*nan* Ru*kai*) Presbyterian Church.

After the signing ceremony, the induction service for their evangelist, Mr. Palripilripi R. Madaralape followed. In his induction speech, he said, "Nan-kai church started by worshipping in members' homes. As the number of worshippers grew, we worshiped in a simple house with an aluminum roof on a piece of land we rented. Now, we have this church to worship in. We give thanks to God. I will do my best, with God's help, to minister to the indigenous people in this city."

The PCT is going to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the gospel in 2015. A mission project, "One-Leads-One Doubling Movement," is being promoted in all Presbyterian congregations. Presbyteries and districts are to encourage all PCT members to lead at least one person to Christ in the coming five years. By doing so, the total membership will double. The goal is, by 2015, to have 300,000 members, to plant 150 more churches, and to send 15 more missionaries to serve churches abroad.

Overseas Staff Birthdays

December

3 - Sheila McKelvie, Pakistan
15 - Rick Allen, Kenya
18 - Andrew Paul Allison, Cameroon
27 - Mary Gorombey, Hungary
29 - Jackie Hoekstra, Malawi
29 - Rachel Julianna Pandy-Szekeres, Hungary

Murray L. Garvin
Yu Shan Theological College
Taiwan

Yu Shan Christmas

Christmas in another country is always interesting. It is a time when we usually try to maintain some of the traditional practices of our homeland, yet we also enter into some of the customs of our new home country. That has certainly been the case for me while teaching English at Yu Shan Theological College in Taiwan.

Personally, I try to observe many of my Canadian traditions. I always put up a Christmas tree with the usual lights and tinsel, but the ornaments I use are mostly Chinese. Usually I put up as many lights as possible and explain them as symbols of the "Light" coming into the world. Now, last Christmas my tree included a string of Canadian moose—a little difficult to explain, but an interesting bit of Canadiana!

For me, Christmas was always a family affair and I am fortunate to have two of my children in Taiwan. My daughter, Ruth, lives in Hualien, near the school, and she always prepares a great Christmas dinner. She manages to find a turkey—it's not easy, but she is very skilled at obtaining things in Taiwan. My son, David, usually comes over from Taipei for the event and we share Christmas gifts at that time. For Ruth, "family" is much bigger than the three of us. She has many friends, both Chinese and foreign, in Hualien and usually a number of them share the Christmas celebration with us.

It is in the school that I encounter some new customs. Around the beginning of Advent, the chapel is decorated. Last year, one of our more artistic students, assisted by classmates, created a beautiful series of arches over the platform. It was all built of driftwood and was in honour of the thousands, mostly aboriginals, who had died in Typhoon Marakot earlier that year. (The school has decided not to take it down.) One of the posts has the five Advent candles attached, which are lit during our daily worship services. The Advent theme is, of course, carried out. Usually on one day, my English drama class presents, more or less effectively, a play depicting some aspect of the Christmas message.

Murray Garvin hosted Yubay and Savi in Canada. Yubay is looking forward to pastoral work or evangelism in his Tayal tribe in Taiwan.

Every year, the school also has a special Christmas meal. Every other year each tribe (we have about 10 in the school) cooks and brings things from their customary fare for a big buffet. In the alternate years, each teacher prepares a special course for a "progressive dinner" with the students going from house to house. Being the capable cook that I am, I usually obtain mine from Pizza Pizza, but the students seem to love it! This is the year for the progressive dinner so I expect I'll be going back to Pizza Pizza for my contribution. On that evening, the students will come around, guitars and all, and sing carols at our door, and then come in for a snack. It's a wonderful feeling.

Christmas day is a bit of a downer around the school as the students are mostly at the churches where they do their practical work, participating in the

Christmas events there. There is no service on campus; however, we are free to go to one of the many aboriginal or Taiwanese churches in the area to join in their Christmas worship.

I don't usually send out Christmas cards, as they are too hard to obtain, but I do send out an email to all the friends and family for whom I have addresses. To those of you for whom I don't have an address, I want to take this opportunity to wish for you a very joyous celebration of the birth of our Saviour, and offer my prayers for a blessed New Year.

Remembering ... students

by Colleen Wood

This past weekend, I had the opportunity to visit a first-year university student from our congregation. I knew her well because she has been our babysitter for almost four years. It was great to see her and I enjoyed hearing about her first few weeks at university while we sipped coffee at a local Starbucks. I was not representing the congregation, but my prayer is that I was representing the Church. If we have been able to 'hold-on' to our young people throughout their high school years, we often lose them when they transition to careers or post-secondary studies. Here are a few suggestions for helping to connect to those young adults:

- Send them off with information! If they are moving, research the area or school where they will be attending. Find out if there are student friendly congregations in their new city. Provide them with information on campus groups and campus chaplains.
- Send them a care package—even if they are local. If they are students, send them a care package in early December as they begin to prepare for exams. Include things, such as treats (peanut free to be safe), gum, pens, pencils, sticky notes, a church bulletin, and a small note saying your prayers are with them.
- If they haven't moved, enjoy them when they do attend church events. Also, remember they are truly adults now, so, even if they are living at home, treat them as adults. They should be offered their own elder, their own offering envelopes, and be notified about special events that might be of interest to them.
- If they have moved, welcome them back at Christmas with a special event. Perhaps have a youth group event that can include young adults.
- If you are a destination for students, welcome new young people in the Fall. Provide rides for students, host student dinners, and get active on your school's campus.
- Visit them.

Know that these are years of new experiences and sometimes the church does get left out. Remembering them now, will help them remember you when they are ready to come back!

In the Society

Saskatchewan WMS

Come Celebrate the Cup of our Life was the theme of Women's Camp held on September 9–11 at Camp Christopher, Saskatchewan.

Forty-eight people registered for the event with Rev. Dr. Sandy Scott and Rev. Dr. HyeRan Kim-Cragg as the main speakers. Rev. Bev. Shapansky led the Sunday worship and communion service. Rev. Gwen Ament from St. Mary, Ontario, had prepared the daily devotions. Also, Rev. Scot, who had just returned from his work as a padre with the Canadian troops in Afghanistan, showed slides from Kandahar and talked about his ministry with the troops on the battlefield.

Rev. Dr. HyeRan Kim-Cragg, professor of Ethics and Worship at St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon, spoke on Christianity in Korea and in particular about the Presbyterian Churches in the republic of Korea (PROK). She spoke about the Min Jung Theology which is the Korean variety of Liberation theology. She also showed the non-violent way in which Koreans demonstrated against the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and showed a very informative power-point presentation.

Canada has been engaged in mission work in Korea since the late 1890s. The Social Gospel theology of the 1920s and 1930s influenced the education, health and justice systems in South Korea. Presently, Canada is the only western country that has diplomatic contact with North Korea. The United Church of Canada (UCC), the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) and PROK are all committed to staying in contact with the Christians in North Korea.

LOCAL

I left the last meeting of my WMS group inspired! My group, St. Andrew's Pringle WMS, Brampton, is actively reaching out.

Recently, a few of our WMS members went through our congregational directory and identified a number of women, who might be interested in attending a WMS meeting. The group also produced a bulletin to tell others about our ministry and our structure.

Members of our current WMS group will approach the women on the list and invite them to a meeting. The

new bulletin can be used as part of the invitation, or may be useful if they have questions following the meeting. Through personal invitation, we hope to see some new faces, and perhaps increase our numbers.

As a member of this group, and a recent newcomer, I can attest to the fact that they are a friendly group, and they have already seen a few new faces in the past few years!

Does your group have something to share? Are you trying something new? Share your stories and perhaps ... we can grow together!

Colleen Wood

Forward in Faith

Here we are, approaching the seasons of Advent and Christmas. The year is almost over yet we are still trying to do our Christmas shopping or plan our family gatherings.

In the midst of this, have you ever thought of giving a gift to the Women's Missionary Society? That would be the easiest Christmas shopping you have ever done.

Perhaps you would like to help fund one of our new two-year Together We Can! projects. This can be done easily by sending a cheque to the WMS office, naming the person for whom the gift is given, and specifying which project.

Or consider, the Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Fund (described fully in the September/October *Glad Tidings*) that assists students from the Bhil area who are training for health care positions. Donations increase the capital of this fund and allow us to assist students year after year—a gift that truly does keep giving.

You could also consider assisting your local group with a donation to help them meet their annual goal for this year. I'm sure they would appreciate your support!

Perhaps you would like to assist a woman in your congregation to attend the National Women's Gathering ***Look In—Shout Out***. This would be a wonderful thing to do! We are trying to encourage as many women as possible from across Canada to attend, and some who would like to come would appreciate some financial assistance.

As you contemplate the wonderful gift to the world of God's Son, I wish you God's richest blessing for a wonderful Christmas and a further wish for health and happiness in the New Year.

Yours in Christ, Janet Brewer, Treasurer

Who and Where

Retired Former Staff Members of the WMS*

Tamiko Corbett
3863 18th Avenue W.
Vancouver, BC V6S 1B4

Eleanor Knott-Crabtree
503 Ridge Road
Meaford, ON N4L 1L9

Doreen Morrison
#712 Walton Place
835 Birchmount Road
Toronto, ON M1K 5K1

Evelyn Murdoch
St. Elizabeth Villa
391 Rymal Road W.
Hamilton, ON L9B 1V2

May Nutt
Leaside Residence
10 William Morgan
Drive Room 701
Toronto, ON M4H 1E7

Diana Wadsworth
33 Inniswood Drive
Toronto, ON M1R 1E6

Ida White
209 Keays Street
Goderich, ON N7A 3N4

*This list represents staff who worked for the WMS prior to the new pension plan introduced in 1974.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada: Regional Field Staff

BRITISH COLUMBIA
Educational Ministries Coordinator
Kathy Ball
5394 Teskey Road
Sardis, BC V2R 5P7
ballteam@shaw.ca

Regional Minister
Wayne Stretch
#601–1420 Beach Drive
Victoria, BC V8S 2N8
waynestretch@shaw.ca

ALBERTA
Director of Regional Ministries
Dianne Ollerenshaw
51 Hobart Road S.W.
Calgary, AB T2V 3K2
dianne.ollerenshaw@gmail.com

SASKATCHEWAN
Regional Staff
Jennifer Bell
925 McKercher Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7H 4T9
jenbell@sasktel.net

MANITOBA AND NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO
Synod Staff
Glenn Ball
Home office (Primary):
39 E. Fotheringham Drive
Brandon, MB R7B 2X1
Winnipeg office:
c/o St. James P.C.
1476 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0W3
rgball@mts.net

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO
Synod Youth Consultant
Spencer Edwards
c/o Erskine P.C.
9 Pearl Street N.
Hamilton, ON L8R 2Y6
syc@connections-online.ca

Camp Kintail Director
Theresa McDonald-Lee
(Winter)
Box 2418
Exeter, ON N0M 1S7
(Summer)
RR#3
Goderich, ON N7A 3X9
trillium@campkintail.ca

Area Education Consultant
Anne Yee-Hibbs
c/o Erskine P.C.
19 Pearl Street N.
Hamilton, ON L8R 2Y6
synodaec@on.aibn.com

SYNOD OF CENTRAL N.E. ONTARIO AND BERMUDA

Youth Ministry Consultant
Jeffrey Crawford
45 Riverwalk Drive
Box 599
Coldwater, ON L0K 1E0
youth.cnob@gmail.com

Synod Education Consultant
Lynda Reid
1301 Neilson Rd
Toronto, ON M1B 3C2
lyndareid@bellnet.ca

Congregational Development Consultant
John-Peter Smit
56 Thirty Third Street
Toronto ON M8W 3H3
johnpetersmit@gmail.com

SYNOD OF QUEBEC AMD EASTERN ONTARIO

Area Education Consultant
Christine Ball
81 McLennan Way
Ottawa, ON K2L 2T2
christine_ball@rogers.com

Area Education Consultant
Anita Mack
285 River Street
St. Lambert, PQ J4P 1E5
anitamack@sympatico.ca

THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Mission and Education Consultant
Audrey Cameron
684 Sherbrooke Road
R.R. #5
New Glasgow, NS
B2H 5C8
a.r.cameron@seaside-highspeed.com

Mission and Education Consultant
Kenneth Stright
15 Kate Court
Halifax, NS B3P 2S5
kennethstright@yahoo.ca

International Ministries

CENTRAL AMERICA

Denise Van Wissen
(September–December 2010)
2066 Rebecca Street
Oakville, ON
L6L 2A2
denisevw@gmail.com
Returning to Nicaragua in 2011

EASTERN EUROPE

Mary Gorombey
The Hungarian Reformed Church
Missions Office
Misszioi Iroda
Abonyi u 21
1146 Budapest, Hungary
mgorombey@rogers.com

Brian Johnston
c/o Protestant Theological Institute
Piata Avram Iancu 13
Cluj-Napoca 3400
Romania
brianjoh2002@yahoo.com

David & Anna Pandy-Szekeres
3950 Sárospatak
Hunyadi János u. 128,
Hungary
al3@bereg.uzhgorod.ua

GRENADA

James and Ann Young
P.O. Box 1886
St. George's, Grenada
West Indies
jim.ann.young@gmail.com

INDIA

Michelle Verwey
c/o MIBE Graduate School for Nurses
Sanyogita Ganj
PO Box 170
Indore, MP 452001,
India
verway_michelle@yahoo.ca

KENYA

Richard Allen
P.O. Box 1226
Kikuyu 00902
Kenya, East Africa
rallen@africaonline.co.ke

Margaret Evans
c/o Shauri Yako
Community Youth Centre
PO Box 87
Nyeri Town, Kenya
margaret.m.evans@gmail.com

MALAWI

Ed and Jackie Hoekstra
c/o Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre Synod
Box 413, Blantyre, Malawi
edhoekstra@sdnp.org.mw
jackiehoekstra@hotmail.com

Glenn and Linda Inglis
c/o Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
Blantyre Synod Development Commission
Box 413, Blantyre, Malawi
glinglis@gmail.com
director@bsdcl.com

PAKISTAN

Bill and Sheila McKelvie
10 Wicklow Street
St. John's, NL A1B 3H2

TAIWAN

Sidney Chang
3, Lane 269, Section 3, Roosevelt Road
Taipei, Taiwan
burnoutrev@gmail.com

Louise Gamble
c/o Tam Kang High School,
No. 26 Chen Li Street
Tamsui,
Taipei, Taiwan
gamble_louise@hotmail.com

Murray Garvin
YuShan Theological College
28 Chih-nan Rd., Sect. 1
Shou-Feng
Hualien 974, Taiwan
m.garvin@mail.yushanth.org.tw

Paul McLean
76 Dallimore Circle
Toronto, ON M3C 4C5
paul.mclean@utoronto.ca

ASSOCIATE MISSIONARY

Sean and Lezlie Allison
10761 W 107th CIR
Westminster, CO
80021-7330
USA
sean-lezlie_allison@sil.org

Michael Tai
163 Chein-kuo S Rd.,
Section 1, 3F
Taichung, Taiwan 402
tai@csmu.edu.tw

Jae Lee
c/o The Chamsil Presbyterian Church
138-1 Garak 2 dong,
Songpa-ku
Seoul, South Korea
Eugene2222@hotmail.com

PASS ME ALONG:

Please share your copy of *Glad Tidings*. This helps others to learn of the great work of the WMS. When you have finished reading your copy, share:

Remembering ... students with your Mission Committee (p. 41)

Christmas and Little Ones to a family with children (p. 5)

Together We Can! to your Stewardship Committee (p. 28)

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

Did you know that the subscription rate for *Glad Tidings* has actually been lowered for 2011? That is the good news. Unfortunately, due to the HST, you will pay a little more.

For 2011, the subscription rate will be $13.50 plus applicable taxes: $15.25 for ON, NL, NB; $15.12 for BC; $15.53 for NS; $14.18 for all other provinces (AB, SK, MB, QC, PEI).

Hopefully, by now the *Glad Tidings* contact person for your congregation will have returned the subscription list to the office. It is helpful for us to receive this by November 1 in order to implement any changes for the January/February issue of *Glad Tidings*. When renewing your subscription, be certain to check that your address is correct.

If you are an individual subscriber and you have moved to a church that has a group, please notify the *Glad Tidings* contact person at your new church. She will be able to add you to her list. If possible, provide her with a copy of the label from a previous issue of your *Glad Tidings* magazine. Also, if you have moved from one group to another this year, again please notify your new *Glad Tidings* secretary.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Florence Kettle
Doris Rooke
St. Andrew's, Barrie ON

Margaret Williams
Varsity Acres Pres. Church, Calgary, AB

Norma Eileen Richardson McGill
Crinan WMS, Crinan ON

Kay Eby
Calvin Presbyterian Church, Kitchener, ON

Doris Johnston
Marian Pafford
New St. James WMS, London Ontario

Elizabeth Stewart
Knox Presbyterian WMS, Monkton ON

Thelma Switzer,
St Andrew's WMS, Mount Forest ON

Elda Grieve
Knox Burgoyne WMS, Port Elgin ON

Freddie Headey
Alice Warner
St. Andrew's
Presbyterian WA, Welland ON

Miss Jean Gardhouse
Mrs. Leona (Lee) Price
WMS Group, Weston Presbyterian Church, Toronto ON

Marjorie Wall
St. Andrew's, Wingham ON

Ruth Embree
Margaret Creelman
WMS, West Point Grey, Vancouver BC

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

PLANNED GIVING

THROUGH THE SEASONS OF THE YEAR

Planting Seeds of Hope for Generations to Come
How Planned Gifts Are Growing the Church and Its Mission
2011 Calendar
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
L'Église presbytérienne au Canada

Every month of the 2011 calendar will share a vibrant photo and story of how Planned Gifts have supported the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada locally, nationally and around the world.

You can also follow along online to get more information and resources such as bulletin inserts as the year unfolds at

www.presbyterian.ca/calendar

Purchase the 2011 Calendar in bulk for

- a WMS fundraiser
- elders to distribute while visiting
- gifts for visitors or speakers

To order, contact The Book Room,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
bookroom@presbyterian.ca, 800-619-7301

NOW AVAILABLE
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
2011 Calendar

PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address